

070.431  
In 8g  
1954

# IPI ASSEMBLY 1954

*The Proceedings*

Published by  
The International Press Institute  
Zurich



# THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

11-12-13 MAY 1954

VIENNA

---

## *The Proceedings*

Published by the International Press Institute

Zurich 1954



*Printed for the International Press Institute  
by Imprimerie Ganguin & Laubscher S. A., Montreux*

## INTRODUCTION

BOOKS STACKS OFFICE

*The Third General Assembly of the International Press Institute was held on May 11 to 13, 1954, at the Palais Pallavicini, Vienna. The complete programme was as follows :*

TUESDAY, MAY 11

**THE WORK OF THE INSTITUTE**

*Morning Session* Address by Lester Markel, Chairman of the Executive Board.

Report on the past year ; presentation of programme for the coming year, by E.J.B. Rose, Director of the Institute.

*Luncheon*

Guest speaker :

**Dr. Julius Raab, Federal Chancellor of Austria**

*Afternoon Session***THE FLOW OF THE NEWS****THE PROBLEMS OF THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER**

Three editors of regional papers discuss the problem of foreign news coverage in newspapers mainly devoted to local and national news.

Chairman :

Marcel Stijns, *Het Laatste Nieuws*, Brussels

Speakers :

Charles Fenby, *The Birmingham Gazette*, England

Rudolf Stickelberger, *Luzerner Neueste Nachrichten*, Switzerland

Chr. S. Oftedal, *Stavanger Aftenblad*, Norway.

*Informal Session*

Informal period during which editors have the opportunity of meeting one another in the lounges of the Palais Pallavicini and of talking over their problems together.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

### THE PRESS AND GOVERNMENTS

*Morning Session* A discussion on interference by governments with the freedom of the press and the measures that the press can take to defend itself. Four editors speak of recent experience in their countries.

Chairman :

Oscar Pollak, *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, Vienna

Speakers :

M. Broughton, *The Cape Argus*, Cape Town  
Marcel Schulte, *Frankfurter Neue Presse*,  
Germany

Ichitaro Takata, *The Mainichi Newspapers*,  
Tokyo

Rohan D. Rivett, *The News*, Adelaide,  
Australia.

*Luncheon*

Guest speaker :

**M. Vincent Auriol, former President of the  
French Republic.**

### *Afternoon Session* A DEBATE ON CRIME REPORTING

Speakers debate how far it is desirable to have full reporting of crimes of violence and sexual crimes, and how far this may be harmful to the community.

Chairman :

A. P. Wadsworth, *Manchester Guardian*,  
England

Speakers :

Maarten Rooy, *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*,  
Holland

James Kerney, Jr., *Trenton Times News-  
papers*, New Jersey

Hans Hoff, Professor of Neurology and Psy-  
chiatry, Vienna University

Florent Louwage, President of the Interna-  
tional Criminal Police Commission  
(Interpol).

*Informal Session* Informal meetings and discussions in the  
lounges of the Palais Pallavicini.

THURSDAY, MAY 13

**THE INSTITUTE'S POLICY AND  
PROGRAMME**

*Morning Session* Members review the work of the Institute,  
discuss the programme proposed by the  
Executive Board and express their views on  
future policy. The Executive Board meet  
on the following day to take note of the  
views of the Assembly.

*Luncheon* Guest speaker :  
**Sir George Thomson, Master of Corpus Christi  
College, Cambridge:**  
"Problems arising from the explosion of the  
hydrogen bomb."

*Afternoon Session* Continuation of the morning's discussion.  
Election of the Executive Board.  
Other Business.

*Informal Session* Informal meetings and discussions in the  
lounges of the Palais Pallavicini.



*The following summary of the Proceedings of the Third General Assembly does not include the luncheon addresses by Dr. Raab, M. Auriol and Sir George Thomson.*

*The complete text of the three business meetings and three professional panels exceeded 150,000 words in length. In the summaries of the contributions by the speakers and by members from the floor, there has been no attempt to give verbatim texts, but wherever space considerations permitted, the speaker's own words have been used. Omission of any questions and comments in the summaries of discussion from the floor has been made both for brevity and in order to keep the sequence of topics.*

*Speakers at each session are fully identified only once.*

*In arranging the sessions for publication the time order has not been followed. The three professional panels are recorded first and the business meetings follow.*



*The  
Professional  
Panels*



# THE FLOW OF THE NEWS THE PROBLEMS OF THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

AFTERNOON SESSION—TUESDAY, MAY 11

## *Panel Discussion*

Chairman : MARCEL STIJNS, Editor, *Het Laatste Nieuws*, Brussels

Speakers : CHARLES FENBY, Editor-in-chief,  
*Birmingham Gazette and Evening Despatch*

RUDOLF STICKELBERGER, Editor,  
*Luzerner Neueste Nachrichten*

CHR. S. OFTEDAL, Editor, *Stavanger Aftenblad*

MR. STIJNS said that the subject of discussion was an aspect of one of the most important problems with which the Institute was concerned—the international flow of news.

The flow of foreign news to local papers was conditioned by the differing circumstances in particular countries. Geography, for example, played a considerable part. In one country, such as Switzerland, distances might be very small but the fact that the valleys were cut off from each other by mountains produced a distinctively local press. In other countries there hardly existed a local press in the normal sense of the term because the same newspapers circulated everywhere. In several countries a distinction could be made between the newspapers appearing in the capital and those published in the provinces ; yet one could still obtain and read the “national” newspaper in the provinces. Again, a newspaper might appear in a town which was not the capital and yet be a “national” newspaper.

Other factors affecting the place of foreign news in the local newspaper were the editor’s attitude to such news, the availability of newsprint, circulation figures and the amount of advertising a paper carried.



MR. FENBY said that the newspapers he controlled circulated over a wide area of the British Midlands, in which nearly four million people lived. Though most of the people lived in Birmingham and in the Black Country, his readers had an extremely wide variety of interests, so that his newspapers were not local papers in the usual sense of the term, but rather regional papers. So much regional news had to be covered each day that the problem was to select from it what was really important. Consequently any suggestion to his staff that they should limit the space given to local news in order to find more space for other news met with frank surprise.

Although the Birmingham region was one of enormously diverse interests, most of the people were linked by the fact that they were engaged in industry of one kind or another. This was important for two reasons. First, it meant that industrial news was of first importance for his newspapers, whether it concerned Britain or the rest of the world, and he and his staff regarded it as their duty to give priority to industrial news, even though theirs were not technical trade newspapers.

### **Influence of Industrial Environment**

Secondly, the Midlands was a part of the world where the industrial environment had a direct influence on the way people thought. The area was a great concentration of Industrial Man—a type with marked special characteristics. Industrial Man's attitude to life was conditioned by his experience of technology, in which all problems yielded to solution by technique and organisation. As a result, he was becoming more and more impatient with the outside world. This was a phenomenon which Mr. Fenby thought was not confined to his own area but was common throughout the world—that the more advanced an industrial community was, the greater was its impatience with the mysterious world outside in which nothing ever seemed to go right. Industrial Man could not understand why the diplomats should present a story which consisted of nothing but half-truths, half-lies, evasions and hesitations. That was one reason why commercial sport played such a tremendous part in the life of such communities. In sport one did arrive at a definite conclusion ; if a football match was won, it was won and no number of diplomats or Foreign Office officials could possibly blur the record.

Besides the character and tastes of the readership, another important factor was the strength of newspaper competition in Britain. The country was dominated in the mornings by its national newspapers—and that was the time of day when the British citizen was supposed to absorb the small amount of serious news he was regarded as capable of digesting. Incidentally, added Mr. Fenby, this fact presented the Institute with one of its greatest problems, because it was the provincial afternoon paper which was steadily becoming more important in Britain and the problem was to influence the afternoon paper to give more serious and more international news.

Competition between the national and the provincial press was certain to be intensified and new technical advances would bring London still closer to the provinces. Further, the British press was facing a major change in the near future—the ending of newsprint rationing. While he deplored rationing as an indefensible interference with freedom, the consequences of free newsprint supplies could not be ignored. Rationing did give a certain amount of protection to the weaker newspaper. When it ended, competition would grow more fierce and would be at the expense of the weaker newspaper—and not only the weaker newspaper, but also the provincial newspaper, whether it was weak or not.

Every newspaper threatened with fresh competition would naturally sharpen its sharpest weapons and put more of its resources into what sold the newspaper best. Since the best weapon of the local press was local news, it was to this department that the local paper would give most attention.

## Handling Foreign News

These two factors—the character of the reader and competition—vitally affected the local newspaper's treatment of foreign news.

Mr. Fenby then turned to the handling of international news in the local newspaper office. What happened to messages when they came in? What did the editor or chief sub-editor think of the agency material he was receiving?

The first difficulty encountered on international news was that it took so much space to say so little. The newspapers which handled foreign affairs best were the biggest newspapers, simply because they had the space in which to give not only the facts—

which were usually few—but also the background atmosphere of events provided by their own correspondents. They were right to afford this space because that was what they were bought for, but these things were luxuries which were not for the local paper. Therefore the sub-editor often discarded a story because it was inordinately long ; because, for example, some international statesman had spoken so verbosely that it defied the sub-editor to cut his speech down to the space available without losing the meaning. Mr. Fenby criticised the practice of some newspapers of cutting long international stories so much that what appeared in print was meaningless to the reader.

A second difficulty was that much important foreign news was contradictory and left the editor with the feeling that whatever he published one day would have to be denied the next. For example, whenever a statesman said something which seemed to have a meaning—for instance, that his country would intervene in some world trouble spot—one could be quite sure that the news would be followed by a week of press conferences at which it would all be denied. This was hard on the newspaper which had to give up the space as a sacrifice.

Thirdly, the sub-editor handling international news had become extremely wary of propaganda. For a newspaper that did not have its own reliable correspondents and an experienced foreign editor, it was extremely dangerous to pass into the paper a great deal of agency news. As a recent example, Mr. Fenby quoted a report on the Soviet budget. This seemed to consist of hard figures, but a sub-editor who examined it closely would find it extremely difficult to know what the figures meant. The end of the Reuter story had said that, although there was an apparent saving in the Soviet defence budget, any saving was accounted for by the fact that there had been a 46 per cent cut in the price of petrol. What was a sub-editor to make of that ?

## Inadequate Explanation

The sub-editor was not only often perplexed ; he was also asked to do work which he should not have to do, because stories were sent out by agencies with too vague designations. For example, foreign newspapers were sometimes quoted without proper explanation of their editorial policy. When recently the French newspaper



*Le Monde* had been quoted as saying that Mr. Aneurin Bevan's resignation from the Shadow Cabinet in Britain was a good example to all European Socialists, *Le Monde* was described as an independent paper ; but any competent sub-editor would be suspicious of such a description because it was hard to see how any independent paper could say that Mr. Bevan had given a good example to Socialists. Because local offices did not have the facilities to check such facts, most editors omitted what they did not understand and the reader was often not properly informed on important world topics.

## More Background, Better Features

What could be done to remedy the situation ? Mr. Fenby thought that agency services had improved in recent years and that their controllers were willing to listen to suggestions, but there was still room for improvement. For example, there should be more documentation to enable newspapers to catch up on a story, so that it did not suddenly appear in the paper after a long interval of time without explanation and the reader was not confronted with news which he did not understand.

Newspapers which had reports from their own correspondents as well as agency messages were in a much better position to assess agency services than the local newspaper. He asked such newspapers, even though they did not need the agencies, to watch and criticise their services for the sake of those other newspapers which depended on the agencies.

Secondly, though he sometimes thought the local newspaper could not go far in improving the supply of international news, it could inform its readers by giving them better background feature articles. He sometimes dreamed of the day when some kind of altruistic organisation, such as the Institute, would be set up as a clearing office to distribute articles on world affairs from unselfish journalists who seriously sought the improvement of information.

There was one further difficulty which he regarded as important. Sometimes it seemed to British editors that their Foreign Office (and he did not know whether this applied to foreign offices in other countries) was still living in a nineteenth century world and believed that opinion was the opinion of an educated minority and

was best moulded through minority newspapers. That might be true, but if the local paper was asked to help to improve the flow of news, the Foreign Office must help the provincial press by making available to it the news which it wanted. Provincial editors often had the feeling that news was being withheld from them. A very recent example concerned the preliminaries to the Geneva conference. Mr. Fenby said frankly that a reader could not learn from his newspapers what had happened when Foster Dulles visited London and would have had to buy another newspaper if he wanted to know. The explanation might be that the other newspaper had a better correspondent or better facilities at the Foreign Office, but it was not right to criticise certain sections of the press if the cream of the news was being withheld from them. Criticism of the local newspaper might be justified, but first they must be sure that it was given the tools with which to do the job.

MR. STICKELBERGER prefaced his talk with a short explanation of the peculiarities of the Swiss press. Switzerland, he said, was a land of contrasts in which four languages were spoken, different religious convictions were held and political parties were widely various. It was also a country richer in newspapers than any other in the world. Most of the newspapers were very small, but each one wanted to have its individual character.

This had its advantages and disadvantages. Switzerland had no newspaper trusts or groups and each newspaper was an entity in itself, taking pride in its own opinions. With one exception, all Swiss newspapers (he spoke particularly of German Switzerland) were local newspapers. The exception was the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, which was a national newspaper, and even that had a very strong and well-developed section of local news. Every Swiss read the newspaper of his place of origin, even when he left his home town and went to live elsewhere. So marked was this tendency that many people who had gone to Zürich to settle there looked askance at the big Zürich newspapers as being almost foreign products.

The multiplicity, small size and tiny circulation of Swiss newspapers meant that their means were extremely limited. Editors of larger newspapers in bigger countries could not imagine the bitterness of the daily struggle between the Swiss editor and his

publisher for the provision of a minimum of technical facilities.

Swiss newspapers must also reckon with the character of their readers, who were excessively critical. The reverse of the saying that 'what was published in the newspaper must be true' held good in Switzerland. He himself had often had the experience of talking to men's clubs in country districts and of being asked : Is what you are telling us and what appears in your newspaper really so ? The Swiss wanted his information to be true and factual. He hated sensationalism and would only swallow a sensation when he did not notice that it was one. Mr. Stickelberger gave as an example a comparison he had made between Swiss newspapers and those he had seen in Vienna. He thought that the Vienna newspapers would not succeed in Switzerland because they carried murder and violence on their front pages and the Swiss reader would not stand for that. Such things had to be reported without display and away from the front page.

## Priority for Foreign News

In Switzerland the first two pages of a newspaper went to foreign news. That was a rigid rule which was only broken at the time of extremely important national or local events, such as elections. The foreign reports were read with great care. The smallness of his country probably had something to do with that ; the Swiss were surrounded by several other nations and so strongly influenced by them that it was an absolute necessity to know what was going on in the world. Such a people read the international news with even greater attention than the local news. In the foreign news section the greatest value was attached to the leading article, which dealt very thoroughly with a particular topical world problem.

Swiss newspapermen found themselves up against the same problem as those in Britain in handling the foreign news. The difficulty lay in the enormous quantity of material from the agencies out of which the really important news had to be extracted. This placed a great responsibility on the sub-editor who, on the smaller newspapers, was the same man as handled local and national news.

The need for commentary was an additional strain. The reader, even of a small country newspaper, wanted his local newspaper to take up a position on the weightiest world problems as well as



small local events. There were Swiss journalists who, day by day, year in year out, wrote about the world scene, and their comments were discussed in the local café and inn. People did not believe that the commentator was always right, but whatever he had to say was eagerly read. There were, in fact, some rather small papers with unimportant circulations whose commentaries were closely studied throughout Switzerland and even in parliament itself.

The news sent into offices from the agencies presented difficulties, though the Swiss Telegraphic Agency (A.T.S.—the national news agency) did a good job in sifting the world agency material before passing it on to the newspapers. Like all other organisations in Switzerland, the ATS had an eye on the educative value of news in sub-editing it, and offensive and scandalous material was removed as far as possible before the messages reached the newspapers. Mr. Stickelberger said that, as his hearers knew, the United Press had a different theory about news; and so it happened that things which had occurred in Switzerland, and had been kept out of sight in the public interest, reached the Swiss press via America to the great surprise of the public.

### Serving Several Newspapers

The foreign correspondent played an important role even in Swiss local newspapers. Although, so far as he knew, only one or two newspapers could afford to keep their own correspondents abroad, the others shared correspondents on personal *ad hoc* arrangements about which it was impossible to lay down firm rules. The same correspondent served four or five non-competing newspapers, sending special articles which could be used as main-page features or minor reports—though nine-tenths of what they sent went into the wastepaper basket because of the shortage of space.

Mr. Stickelberger thought that this type of work was underpaid in Switzerland. Though some of the correspondents were on a retainer, most were paid on a freelance basis, and he knew that many of them did not receive value for their work. That, however, was a problem bound up with the smallness of the country and was influenced by the Swiss habit of paying too little for brain work. Though, as everybody knew, Switzerland was prospering at present, the one exception to those enjoying the prosperity was

the intellectual. He hoped that greater cooperation and a closer understanding of the position by the newspaper owner would put an end to this unsatisfactory position of the foreign correspondent.

MR. OFTEDAL said that all newspapers, more or less, were essentially local newspapers and that, wherever one went in the world, the atmosphere of the newspaper was that of the place where it was published. Nevertheless, it was necessary to make a distinction between local and national papers, as well as between them and the handful of newspapers which counted as international organs. In a certain sense, "international" newspapers were more often found among the local than among the national press. National newspapers had a certain tendency towards nationalism and sensationalism, whereas local papers were better protected against the nervous strain of competition and were therefore more "decent," if he might use the expression.

Why were some newspapers more international in outlook than others? In his opinion, it depended a great deal on the editorial staff and naturally also on the public. The milieu in which a newspaper was published influenced the newspaper. For example, in countries or regions where shipping was a predominant interest the people had a more international outlook than those in the hinterland. In importing countries the people had a more provincial outlook on the world than those in exporting countries.

Those who, like himself, lived in small countries had been compelled since the second world war and the invention of the H bomb to interest themselves in international news. Since the last war there had been a complete change in outlook and public interest in his country.

He thought that his listeners might be interested to know what were the chief news sources for the press in a small country like Norway. There was a national news agency owned and conducted by the newspapers—as there was also in Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and others small countries.

This agency distributed 20,000 words daily to its 150 member newspapers, of which 12,000 words were home news and 8,000 foreign news. This proportion was roughly the same in Denmark and Sweden. The main source for the Norwegian agency was

Reuters which today was supplying 65 per cent of the news distributed ; 20 per cent came from Agence France-Presse and the remaining 15 per cent was accounted for from various sources—such as the news that came from exchange arrangements with other Scandinavian countries or from monitoring TASS and DPA or from Group 39 (a group of West European news agencies pooling news services).

From all these sources the Norwegian news agency received daily some 70,000 words, but only 8,000 were distributed to newspapers. The fact that 65 per cent of this wordage came from Reuters must be regarded as a compliment to the integrity of British-supplied news. The American agencies AP and UP also had their own clients among Norwegian newspapers.

The Norwegian news agency did not distribute matter which editorialised on the news but reported only facts, and in practice virtually all sensational news on crime and sex was eliminated.

The extent to which the Norwegian provincial newspaper interested itself in foreign news was illustrated by the *Bergens Tidende*, which published proportionately more foreign news than any other newspaper in Norway. He would not deal with figures and percentages because he did not feel that these gave a fair picture of a newspaper's foreign reporting.

## Need for Interpretation

His opinion was that people today were, to borrow a phrase quoted in a recent article in IPI REPORT, more or less “news drunk.” In these days of radio, television and fast telecommunication services the great need was for more interpretation and background news and more intelligent editorial comment. But it was essential that such comment should not be biassed and it should be written from the viewpoint of people who felt themselves members of a larger entity than their national group.

Periodicals were a very useful source for this type of explanatory news and on his newspaper they were using young scientists from the local university to comb foreign journals for this kind of news. It was particularly useful for news from Russia to have such experts closely reading publications which came from the Soviet Union and giving the news in its background. Much of the news was difficult to understand and if one did not give an



intelligent explanation one was merely bewildering the public.

In this connection the presentation of the news was of the utmost importance. What the newspaper had to do, if he might borrow his terms from the British Broadcasting Corporation, was to dress up Third Programme material and make it appear like the Light Programme. Mr. Oftedal demonstrated a new technique which his newspaper had introduced, with great success, to surmount the difficult problem of front-page news stories which had to be "continued on the back page." They were now printing half of the back page upside down so that the reader could fold the upper half of the paper over and read the continuation of a front-page story. The other half of the back page was given to feature material which "personalised" the foreign news of the day—anecdotes about such people as General de Castries or Dr. Oppenheimer or a "profile" from the London *Observer*.

## Sending Local Men Abroad

Another important point in handling foreign news was to have articles written about leading people of the day, such as Vyshinsky or Dulles, by men who had seen and met them. Though the smaller newspaper could not afford to keep permanent correspondents abroad, his experience was that it was a good policy to send on special assignments local men whom all the readers knew, because such reporters knew what the readers wanted and they gave the newspapers individuality. Further, the reader trusted the local man because he knew whom he was dealing with. If a newspaper sent its own reporters out, it built up in the home office a series of experts on every country able to give background to the news as it happened.

Mr. Oftedal had asked the foreign editor of the *Bergens Tidende* what, in his opinion, was the most important quality in foreign reporting and he had replied with one word—continuity. He agreed that continuity was the most important thing, but he also thought that editorial independence was a valuable quality—independence not only of governments but also of the tastes of the worst section of the public. Newspapermen did not always remember the bad effects that the press today could have on the nervous system of modern man. Mr. Oftedal thought that the most important guide on the question of foreign news in the local press was the motto

of the *Christian Science Monitor*, "To injure no man but to bless all mankind."

### *Discussion from the Floor*

ERICH WAGNER (Dimitag, Bonn) said that it was vital to the local newspaper that it should not allow itself to be stifled by the small town atmosphere of its local community, but that it should always keep a window open on the world. Eighteen months before he had visited a newspaper with a circulation of nearly 300,000 publishing in a large town in the American Middle West and its editorial staff had explained to him, without any apparent regret for their isolationism, that during the previous week they had published only two or three news items from Europe and nothing at all from Germany. While the German press today was as much open to criticism as the press of any other country, it seemed to him that it was relatively superior in the fullness of its foreign news coverage or at any rate in its conception of the necessity for such fullness. Even in the local newspaper the German reader received a complete account of what was happening in the Viet Nam jungles, whether General Neguib was back again at the head of the Egyptian State and what kind of hot water Senator Mc Carthy had got himself into.

Nevertheless, in a world which was growing steadily more complicated it was not enough to satisfy the need for really good and complete news coverage. The newspaper reading public wanted more: it wanted the individual report. It wanted the analysis of particular events from the pen of a special correspondent, it wanted news with its own flavour. Journalists on local papers should want that just as much. This was the kind of work which his own group was doing.

In Germany a pool of medium-sized and smaller newspapers had been formed with a very definite journalistic object. This pool received from Dimitag by teletype its own selection of agency messages and in addition special material from correspondents of Dimitag which compared in topicality, colour and comprehensiveness with what the large newspapers were receiving. His agency maintained its own correspondents in 20 foreign and 15 German cities and, thanks to the advantages accruing to any cooperative

effort, this was done without involving the newspapers in too great expense. He gave this example of his own agency as an indication of something which might also be done in other countries.

HELMUT SCHEUING (*Neue Württembergische Zeitung*) thought that the problem of proper foreign news coverage was just as important for the local newspaper as for the large daily. There were comparatively few readers who could afford to take a large daily in addition to their local newspaper ; consequently, the local paper was under as much of an obligation as the large paper to give its readers as complete and continuous a report of events abroad as was possible. The suggestion had already been made that the interest of the reader could be awakened by publishing particularly important foreign news in a particular place every day, so that the reader was tempted to develop an appetite for such news.

## Better Balance in Foreign Report

The Institute, in its report on the flow of the news, had already discussed the preference of most readers in most countries, with the possible exception of Switzerland, for scandal, crime and other sensational stories, while interest in political events was proportionately narrower. In his view more attention should be paid—and he thought that this was the special duty of the news agencies—to introducing into their foreign reports non-political and local news as far as possible, in order to give a more complete picture of other countries.

He wished further to underline the point, already stressed by Mr. Oftedal, that interpretation of foreign news was very important because not every reader was in a position to understand clearly the background of every news report he read. He also emphasised the special importance of the continuity of news reporting. The news agencies often made the mistake of launching an interesting story on the world and then stopping it as soon as it became less interesting. As a result, newspapers had no idea how a story, which they had begun to report two or three days before, had ended.

ALF SCHIÖTTZ-CHRISTENSEN (*Aalborg Stiftstidende*) said that, as a Danish provincial editor, he would like to explain how some of his country's newspapers obtained their own international news

service. He spoke for five provincial newspapers, each with a circulation of about 30,000, which had come together and decided that it would be useful for them to have their own correspondents in England and Germany. An additional reason for the decision was that, with the freeing of newsprint, they were facing sharp competition from the national newspapers. They also thought that their readers would be more interested in what the newspaper's own correspondents in London and Bonn would have to say when writing regularly under their own by-line, especially as the correspondents would be reporting events from a distinctively Danish standpoint.

### Using Pool Technique

Each day the newspapers in the pool obtained a teletype link with London and Bonn and received news of the day, leading articles from the principal British and German newspapers, background material, personality sketches and so on. To a certain extent these correspondents were also able to report on events in other countries—the London correspondent on the United States and the Bonn correspondent on Austria. The correspondents were free to move about ; for example, the Bonn correspondent would cover a big meeting in Strasbourg and the London correspondent might cross to the Netherlands or Belgium to cover an outstanding story there.

He agreed with Mr. Oftedal on the importance of continuity in reporting and said that one of the great advantages of having one's own correspondent was that he could follow a story to the bitter end.

Commenting on Mr. Fenby's point that in Britain the Foreign Office did not show much interest in the provincial press, he said that the same thing was true in Denmark. It was a strange thing because the circulation of the provincial press as a whole was much larger than that of the national press ; yet Foreign Office officials would rather see themselves quoted in one or two national papers appearing in the capital. The probable reason was that these were the newspapers read by the officials themselves who were not interested in the provincial press.

T. E. HENRY (*Manchester Evening News*), said that he thought that self-help was still a virtue in journalism. Too many people



were ready to blame shortcomings in interpretation of foreign news on the agencies. He thought that the news agencies were doing a good job now and were sending in background information which could be built up inside the newspaper office into the leading article type of material. The growing appetite for foreign news was proved in Britain by the increasing circulation of such papers as *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Manchester Guardian*. The alert editor today had to consider throwing out a small case of local interest in order to give the reader a mixture of international news. The choice had to be made because the people wanted more foreign news.

JOHN HARRIS (*Hutchinson News Herald*, Kansas) said that he would like to answer the point made by Mr. Wagner about the American Middle-West paper which had published very little European news. He granted that this practice made a stupid newspaper, but he would uphold the right of a newspaper to be stupid if it chose. The only people with the right to judge a newspaper were its readers. Every local newspaper had to make up its own mind what it would publish out of the world flow of news.

### Dutch Local Press Gaining Ground

G. BALLANTIJN (*Prov. Zeeuwse Courant*, Middelburg) said that provincial editors in the Netherlands could feel satisfaction at the fact that the number of readers of local newspapers in his country had been steadily growing since the war, whereas the national newspapers were being proportionately less read than they were before the war. At the same time this increased the responsibility of the local editor and he thought it might be interesting to explain how Dutch editors had faced the task. Even before the war there had been a pool of the big local newspapers in the Netherlands. After the war practically all the important local newspapers had combined in pools of at least ten newspapers. These pools used joint foreign correspondents and also made arrangements for common reporting of national affairs. The most important pools had reached the point where they exchanged news with other countries and even with other continents. For example, the pool to which his own newspaper (a provincial with 30,000 readers) belonged, exchanged foreign news with Australia and South Africa and was making arrangements to do the same with America. When that happened in more countries, he thought they would have attained

one of the most important aims of the International Press Institute.

Asked by CHARLES EADE (*Sunday Dispatch*, London) how costs were distributed, Mr. Ballantijn said that methods varied. For example, in one pool consisting of ten large provincial newspapers each paid the same sum every year independently of its circulation figure. His own pool, of which he was secretary, distributed costs according to circulation. This pool consisted of ten newspapers, of which one had seven separate editions, so that one could say that there were really 16 newspapers. His own newspaper was the second largest and paid proportionately, while another newspaper, with only 13,000 readers, paid much less. The pools worked extremely well and editors were very well satisfied with them.

## Influencing Public Opinion

LEONIDAS MARTINIDES (Internationale Wirtschaft, Vienna) said that it was important to take account of the effect of the local press on public opinion. As lecturer in journalism he had studied this problem in various countries and he had been repeatedly struck by the fact that the local newspaper had a much more direct effect on public opinion than the national or large international newspaper. In fact, the smaller a newspaper's circulation and the narrower its circulation area, the greater its influence. There was an obvious psychological explanation of this in that every reader of a small newspaper was in a position to check the accuracy of its news on local affairs and consequently confidence in the newspaper's veracity on local affairs led the reader to trust it also on foreign and political news. This placed a special responsibility on the local paper in the field of foreign news. It was precisely in this respect that the difficulties of the local paper's limited resources made themselves most felt. Several of his colleagues had reported the practice of establishing pooled foreign correspondents for local newspapers. He wished to suggest that in addition opportunities should be given to small local newspapers to send members of their staff for a short period to a friendly newspaper abroad, perhaps on an exchange basis. The knowledge thereby gained of local newspapers in other countries would certainly have a beneficial effect on the newspaper's reporting of foreign affairs and consequently promote wider cooperation in the free world.

ANDERS INGVE PERS (*Västmanlands Läns Tidning*, Västerås) said that he was from a provincial daily newspaper with a circulation of about 35,000. While Mr. Oftedal had covered most of the points that Scandinavian editors would make, he thought it necessary to say a few words of warning. Much had been said about the importance of giving the news background and continuity, but it must be remembered they were editing newspapers which had to give the hot news every day. The newspapers must naturally comment on that news and do it quickly. There was a risk that provincial newspapers were asking too much from the agencies, in wanting to receive quick commentary and background material from them. At the same time, much had been said during the discussion about the need for a local paper to give local colour and be reliable. Most newspapers could not wait but must give commentary as soon as the news broke. One solution of this problem was to have plenty of material available in the newspaper 'morgue' for quick reference. If that were achieved, it was for the editor to stay in his office and study the material, if necessary until midnight, writing up the background.

### Battle with Rising Costs

Mr. Eade asked if some editor could answer what he regarded as the most important question of all. How was the local newspaper to survive at all if costs in all departments of newspaper production were to go on rising as they had been doing over past years and were still rising from month to month? This was certainly true of England, as he was sure local newspaper editors present would agree. They knew that newsprint would be completely freed from rationing, probably in the following year. That meant an increase in the advertising that went to the big national newspapers, so that local newspapers might find themselves in grave financial difficulties. He had read that many small newspapers had closed down in the United States. It was all very well to say that the smaller newspapers could combine and share foreign correspondents, but the real problem was how to protect the small paper from the colossal rise in costs of wages, telephones, cables, newsprint and so on. How was the small local newspaper to stand up to this problem?

Mr. Stijns thanked Mr. Eade for raising the question. He pointed

out that newsprint had been free of rationing for several years in Belgium. In 1952, newspapers there had been extremely embarrassed by the steadily rising price of newsprint. Nevertheless, through the good relations which had been established abroad with the help of the International Press Institute, he had been able to persuade the American State Department to put a ceiling price on newsprint and that had been a turning-point in the newsprint war. From then on the price had gone on falling and last year had been a fairly good one for Belgian newspapers. This year the price had begun to rise again. This was naturally a problem for journalists and newspapers, especially those which wished to inform their readers about international and national events. Nevertheless, Belgian newspapers had managed to survive the crisis without a single one going under. He thought the reason for that was that the small local newspapers had shown a remarkably strong fighting spirit against competition. As a result, newspapers representing every shade of opinion still existed. He hoped and he was sure that when competition sharpened in Britain, the fighting spirit there would be strong enough to ensure the survival of newspapers.

## Facing the Same Problems

ERIK BENGTTSSON (*Karlshamn Allehanda*) said that Mr. Martinides' point that the smaller a newspaper was, the greater was its influence, made him the most important person in the room, because his newspaper was probably the smallest represented. Including its two newspapers appearing four times a week, it had a circulation of 12,000. Mr. Martinides' words had been a great encouragement to him ; otherwise he would have been depressed by the fact that the newspapers being spoken of as local newspapers had very large circulations. But the discussions had indicated that large and small newspapers faced roughly the same problems.

He felt that he must take issue with Mr. Harris' point which, if he had understood it aright, was that a newspaper's judges were its readers. Mr. Harris had used the point as a defence of editors who gave little foreign news, but experience in Sweden had been very different. Swedish provincial newspapers found it good policy to increase the amount of foreign news which they gave because their readers wanted it and insisted on it.



Turning to Mr. Eade's question about economic difficulties, Mr. Bengtsson agreed that it was most important for small newspapers. In Sweden they were meeting the same difficulties as British and American publishers and editors, in that the costs of producing a small newspaper were rapidly mounting. This, he felt, was a problem which F. I. E. J. ought to tackle.

Speaking as a journalist, he agreed that a newspaper had to make its foreign news as intelligible to the reader as possible.

R. P. T. GIBSON (Westminster Press Provincial Newspapers, London) said that he represented a provincial group in England. While the economic problem raised by Mr. Eade was preoccupying them, he did not see the future in as black colours as Mr. Eade had painted it, for two reasons. First, the basis of their prosperity was local advertisements and they must see that it remained so. Secondly, as had been mentioned earlier, the local newspaper reader showed more trust in his newspaper than in any other newspaper. That was a point which national advertisers did not overlook. Nevertheless he did agree with Mr. Eade that the weakest local newspapers would perhaps go under.

DR. VINCENT NAESER (*Berlingske Tidende*, Copenhagen), attending as an observer, said that he wished to speak as a newspaper reader. Everybody had said that what they wanted was that all newspaper readers should have an intelligent understanding of the foreign news ; this was as true for the large newspaper as for the small. In that case it was nonsensical to write such sentences as: "It is rumoured that the A. B. C. section of the D. E. F. commission seems to have come to a negative conclusion." Something more concrete was needed.

## How the Institute Helps

Concluding the session, Mr. Stijns said that one of the points which had emerged clearly from the discussion was that the Institute was fulfilling in many ways the needs of the local newspaper in the department of foreign news. Lester Markel, the chairman of the Institute, had said in an article in the bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors that it was very necessary for sub-editors to travel abroad. He was sure that everybody agreed with that statement. Many newspapers did not have the resources to keep correspondents in every country ; it was therefore the more

important that the men who had to handle the news from the agencies should have a competent knowledge of the kind of news with which they were dealing. Another problem which the Institute had undertaken was exchanges on the editorial side which was in accordance with views which had been expressed during the present conference. A third way in which the Institute was trying to help was by arranging regional meetings among editors and sub-editors from different countries—which, he felt, would result in an improvement of understanding.

# THE PRESS AND GOVERNMENTS

MORNING SESSION—WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

## *Panel Discussion*

Chairman : OSCAR POLLAK, Editor, *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, Vienna

Speakers : MORRIS BROUGHTON, Editor, *The Cape Argus*,  
Cape Town

MARCEL SCHULTE, Editor, *Frankfurter Neue Presse*

ICHITARO TAKATA, Assistant Managing Editor, *The  
Mainichi Newspapers*, Tokyo

ROHAN D. RIVETT, Editor, *The News*, Adelaide

DR. POLLAK said that the subject before the meeting—the freedom of the press—was of deep and special interest to the Institute, since it was one of the reasons for which it had been founded.

The problems which the speakers would discuss were the relationship between newspapers and governments in various countries, the ways in which efforts could be or were being made to limit press freedom and the methods by which the press could defend itself. But there was another aspect of the question which would also be discussed—the means by which the press sought, especially in England and Sweden, to avoid governmental regimentation by adopting forms of voluntary self-control.

It was particularly appropriate that a representative of the Austrian press should have been asked to preside at the discussions, because in this matter Austria occupied a unique place in the newspaper world. It was the only country in which press freedom was faced with not one but five governments—its own and those of the four occupying powers. Between the Austrian Government and the press the position was reasonably satisfactory. He could affirm what the Austrian Chancellor had said the previous day, when he addressed the Assembly as a guest of honour, that the

Austrian Government and law fully respected freedom of the press. The press law was in general a good liberal law. There was only one point in it which he would mention specially, because of its international significance. The law expressly guaranteed the right of the press to keep its sources of information secret.

With the other four governments there were certain difficulties about press freedom. Two of the problems were unique. There were a Russian and an American newspaper published in Austria. The Russian newspaper did not have a single voluntary reader. The American newspaper was in the special position of being a "government paper" but it was the paper of a foreign government ; in spite of its excellent journalistic qualities, it did offer unfair competition to the Austrian press.

The press ordinance in Austria had been established in October 1945 on the order of the Allied Council and it contained some fairly strict regulations against which it would be easy for any editor to offend. Fortunately there had to be unanimous agreement in the Allied Council about whether the ordinance had been infringed. As for a long time the Allied Council had failed to reach unanimous agreement on anything, this fact was the surest basis of press freedom in Austria.

MR. BROUGHTON said that the position in Austria might be called a pale reflection of that in South Africa. The South Africans were an extremely divided people ; to some extent they could be said to be four nations, which unfortunately fell into racial groups and this was reflected in the press. The government itself largely reflected only one racial and linguistic group.

It was important to state at the outset that the troubles of the South African press—which newspapermen there regarded as most urgent and vital—could not all be blamed on the present government. The trespassing of the government on press freedom had been going on for about twenty years. In Britain, he thought, this encroachment had been turned back somewhat, but in his country it was still continuing.

There was no censorship and no directives were issued to the press. Neither directly nor indirectly did the government attempt to limit press comment. Nevertheless, pressure on editors was



steadily growing and their freedom was being constantly diluted politically, legally, psychologically and racially. There was a whole body of law which made it extremely difficult for any journalist to do his work.

For example, South Africa had a Riotous Assemblies Act, which meant that in racial conflicts the minister or commissioner of police could make a proclamation, whereupon newspapers were debarred from any reporting of incidents without police permission.

## Strict Reporting Rules

South Africa also had a series of well-intentioned acts—for instance, the Children's Protection Act—which prevented the press from reporting, without the special permission of the magistrate, cases of immorality, indecency, blackmail, extortion or brutal assault. The rules were extremely strict. In order to report such a case the reporter must apply to the magistrate and obtain his signed permission, which was not given very easily. Without such written permission, no sub-editor would publish any report. The magistrates interpreted this rule as designed to bar the reporting of such cases altogether. In its desire to cover these cases, the South African press was not on the lookout for sensation; it was often very important that cases of corruption should be brought to public knowledge. After a considerable struggle, the press had persuaded most magistrates to recognise that the rule was permissive and that prohibitions should be exceptional.

This kind of rule had been extended beyond the letter of the law. If, for example, an aircraft accident took place, the press could report it only after the relatives of the victims had been informed. Here again the official tendency was to hush up the news and the press found it very hard to get the facts. In the case of a series of air-field accidents the only way in which the press had been able to get access to the facts had been to have the matter raised in Parliament on a question.

In Parliament itself there was also indirect intrusion on press freedom. The government was extremely sensitive to criticism. It must be remembered that the press in South Africa was largely English-speaking. There was also an Afrikaans-speaking press which, he was sure, would agree with what he was saying because

it attached as great importance to its freedom as did the English press. Nevertheless there was a division because the Afrikaans press supported the government and the English press opposed it.

Just before Mr. Broughton had come to Vienna, he had been called before the Speaker of the House for the second time. This severe ordeal had originated in a report from the political correspondent of the *Cape Argus* that the Minister of Justice had been absent from Parliament for five days. The report had been based on a front-bencher's statement, but the Minister declared in the House that the reporter, naming him, was a liar and that the editor of the *Cape Argus* ought to know that he had liars on his staff. This went into the official parliamentary report and, though the newspaper had challenged the Minister to make the statement outside Parliament, he had not done so. Thereupon Mr. Broughton wrote a leader saying that the number of liars in public life was growing everywhere, but perhaps less in the press than elsewhere and certainly not on the *Cape Argus*. In the opinion of the newspaper, it was wrong that Parliament itself did not defend its people against such attacks.

### Privilege for One Side Only

This sentence was construed as a breach of parliamentary privilege. Mr. Broughton pointed out that he entirely supported the principle of such privilege. He had told the Speaker that he would be the last to bring Parliament into contempt and that his statement had been directed at members. Nevertheless, when the Speaker reported the interview in the House later, he said that Mr. Broughton had agreed that the newspaper's statement was a breach of the privileges of the House.

Mr. Broughton pointed out that he had never agreed this and in fact the whole basis of the argument had been shifted. In his view it was open to the press to criticise the behaviour of Members of Parliament, whereas, in the view of the Speaker, there was a fully protected entrenched right of Members to say what they liked without any freedom for the press to comment if what they thought a speaker had said was excessive.

In South Africa it was also possible to libel associations. Recently a society had been criticised in the press as "a Society of Blimps," whereupon one member of the society, its chairman, sued the news-

paper on the ground that he was a very well known man and had been injured in public life, and he had been awarded damages.

Again, there was no privilege for a newspaper reporting an arrest and on each occasion the newspaper had to ask itself whether the report was worth the risk.

## Strain on South African Editor

All these things placed a great weight of responsibility and strain upon the editor who, as a result, tended more and more to keep in certain safe channels.

He would give one final example of legal restrictions on press freedom. Under the Suppression of Communism Act, a minister had the power to suspend an editor, forbid him ever to write anything else in South Africa, limit him to any given area and suspend his newspaper. These were enormous powers to wield against the press.

Unlike Austria and America, South Africa had no special law to protect the press and did not claim that. All it did want was the same freedom as was secured to any citizen of a free country under the rule of law. That was all the press asked. But he wanted to stress—not as a criticism of the present government but as a fact—the powers the government had at its disposal against the press.

Finally, the position of the South African press was weakened in one further respect and it was something of which the Assembly should take note. Although the press did not ask for any more freedom than the ordinary citizen enjoyed and although it believed that the freedom of the press entrenched and protected the freedom of the citizen, so that a threat to its rights was also a threat to those of the citizen, the people in South Africa did not care. Recently a Labour paper, *The Guardian*, had been suppressed in spite of newspaper protests, without a single movement on the part of the public.

During the previous session on foreign news in the local paper, an American editor had defended the right of an editor to make a fool of himself. Mr. Broughton asked whether he would also defend the right of an editor to make a Communist of himself.

In South Africa, apart from all political problems, the press was facing very stern and difficult racial problems.

Summing up, Mr. Broughton said that the picture he wished to leave with his hearers was one of steady encroachment on press freedom in South Africa from good motives on legal, political and moral grounds, and that the press had no defence except that which editors in conferences like the present one could devise for themselves.

MR. SCHULTE said that it must be understood that in Germany freedom of the press could be endangered not only by measures taken by the government and other authorities but also, and to no smaller extent, by the policy of the press itself. Even journalists, who were supposed to be the front-line champions of press freedom, often criticised newspapers which took an independent attitude for following "a zig-zag course," because they believed that questions of public interest could not be viewed independently but must always be looked at from a party angle. This absence of the will or ability to think independently was a point which must be continually borne in mind.

If the German Government had no ambitions to turn the press into its mouthpiece, it would be the first government the world had ever seen which avoided that temptation. It was therefore understandable that, in dealing with the press, it should turn to full account the extremely weak economic power of the press to resist it.

In seeking to control the press, the government was assisted by the German passion for having everything cut and dried and set out as far as possible in legal paragraphs. As a result of the constant multiplication of press laws, Germans were looking back wistfully to the days of Bismarck and his press law of 1874.

The way these laws had been applied had soon shown that, while they did not represent a serious attempt to limit the freedom of the press, they had nevertheless caused the newspapers considerable difficulties. Yet the press had not been able to bring about desirable changes in the law, because the parliamentary machine worked too slowly and arguments for change were met with the counter-argument that the press should wait for a new Federal measure.

The mistake the German press had made had been in co-operating with the German Government ; it had itself worked to



devise laws, whereas it should have proceeded from the assumption that there should be no special law or that, if there had to be a law, it should be as restricted in character as possible. Many journalists had in fact cooperated with the government because they hoped thereby to improve their own economically weak position. Another consideration had been the memory of the press legislation of the Third Reich, which had reduced press freedom to an invisible minimum but had elevated the social status of the journalist by creating a hierarchy of titles in newspaper offices.

Mr. Schulte felt that he must say a few words about the mentality of the people who had favoured the establishment of a press law immediately after the formation of the Federal Government. Democracy was not a matter of form but of habit, and it was a habit which the German authorities had found difficult to acquire, so that the German press was constantly being forced to resist very vigorously.

### Pressure to Reveal Sources

He could give two recent examples of this attitude of the German authorities. Frankfurt-am-Main was a city whose democratic liberalism was renowned throughout the world. In that city a fight had developed between his newspaper and the council not because his newspaper had become embroiled with the council in any way, but only because it had come to the knowledge of the council that one of his staff had obtained information about what had happened at a private session. This struck the council as intolerable. Although no public use had been made of this information and there was no law by which the journalist could be forced to reveal his sources, a slander suit was started, on the ground that the journalist had slandered the members present at the private session by saying that somebody among them had 'leaked' the information. It was felt that in this way the journalist could be forced to reveal the source of his information.

A second example occurred in the Westphalian town of Springe, where the authorities had recently decided to issue a warning to press representatives against obtaining information which was not handed out at press conferences. Any pressman who was warned twice was thereafter excluded from the press conferences. At a special sitting in April the executive committee of the town council

of Bünde had reached a similar decision. The same thing had happened in the little Hessian town of Bensheim.

Such examples of the perpetual attempt of the authorities to limit the freedom and independence of the press could be multiplied at will. They were, however, sufficient to show that the authorities did everything possible to attain their ends by special legislation. Mr. Schulte recalled that, at the time when the Federal Republic was still being administered by the three-zonal commission and he had been deputy chief of its press division, high officials had assured him that it was high time a ministry of propaganda was created, equipped with such complete powers that at the least the views of the administration should appear in the daily press in the way and at the length which the administration thought proper.

### Attempts to Control Press

The first attempt to control the press occurred shortly after the creation of the Federal Republic but did not become public knowledge until much later because the Ministry of the Interior, which was working on the plan, did not announce it till the last minute, thinking that its best chance to succeed lay in surprise. This first draft of a Federal press law, which was published at the beginning of March 1952, consisted of no less than 64 paragraphs taking care of literally every aspect of the question. Fortunately the whole German press realised how dangerous the law was and the government was forced by the unfavourable reaction to withdraw the draft very quickly.

The next attempt to limit press freedom occurred during the election in 1953. The government found that it did not have a press which would support it at any price and so it devised a plan—which fortunately came to public knowledge in good time—for creating a Ministry of Information. The most interesting point about this plan was that it was devised by completely democratic and otherwise irreproachable people, many of whom had been in concentration camps under the Third Reich, acting from the highest motives. But, despite their goodwill and their hope that such a ministry would perhaps enable the government better to fight rising Neo-Fascism, they forgot that they might be replaced by men who would make a most undesirable use of such an instrument of propaganda.

The fact that this plan was also very quickly withdrawn, it must be confessed, was due not so much to the united resistance of the German press, but much more to the solid backing of the foreign press and above all of the British press, which gave exemplary support. But after the election the Ministry hastened to toy once again with the project of a Federal press law. Even the German union of journalists had authorised a committee of experts to work on a draft for such a press law.

## Existing Laws Sufficient

This step did not have the support of all German journalists. Mr. Schulte himself had opposed it because he believed that the existing penal regulations were completely sufficient and there was no reason why this should not be good enough for Germany as it was for Britain.

It was also important to mention the growing practice of confiscating newspapers and magazines. It was sufficient for one local magistrate to take action for a newspaper to be banned throughout the whole of the Federal Republic.

What German journalists needed was not the creation of new laws but the abolition of existing laws—and in particular of paragraph 353 C. of the penal code, introduced by the National Socialists, under which a journalist could be punished for publishing secret information and it was left to the Minister of Justice to decide the definition of secret information. In spite of the introduction of a motion in Parliament and repeated sharp protests from the German press, this paragraph had not yet been abolished. He was afraid that it never would be abolished because it simplified the work of the authorities and put such heavy pressure on the press that the judiciary and governmental authorities were not interested in removing it. Nevertheless, it seemed to him that a campaign to remove such laws as this would be far more useful in Germany than journalists' cooperation in working out new laws.

The German passion for setting everything down in legal black and white found its nadir in the so-called "dirt and rubbish" law banning literature considered dangerous to young people. Although this law had been in force for a year, it had had no effect and it might be expected that it would have the same fate as had had a similar law under the Weimar Republic. None the less, such

an instrument in the hands of different men from those who were now running the Federal Republic could be a dangerous weapon. Once again, there existed already in the ordinary penal code sufficient powers to prevent the distribution of pornographic literature. If they had not been used in the past, that was an argument not against the laws but against the laxity of the people administering them.

It was impossible to set proper limits to the freedom of the press by special legislation. Anybody who wanted the truth published must accept the possibility of occasional mistakes. Such an attitude of toleration was essential, otherwise the press must withdraw from public life. To try to kill lying on a private scale by means of law amounted to replacing private lies with official lies ; and the danger of official lying had been proved by the history of totalitarian systems all over the world.

Summing up, it was true to say that in Germany the freedom of the press was still officially untouched. The attacks that had been made on it so far arose out of ignorance of democratic practices and not out of ill will. These attacks would go on until democracy took root and the past was forgotten. The mistakes which the press was making in its battle for liberty were not fundamental but arose from too strong preoccupation with the past. Old habits of thought were also responsible for the present monotony of the German press.

### Awareness of Danger Growing

Fortunately, there were signs that the German press was becoming aware of the potential dangers of press legislation. At present the Federal Minister for Special Tasks, Mr. Schäfer, had been entrusted with the task of producing a new draft press law which would once again lay stress on so-called self-control by the press. It was Mr. Schulte's information that the German publishers' associations had opposed very strongly the attempt to strangle the press in a mass of legal red tape. Even in the journalists' union, which had not shown itself so keenly aware of the dangers, the minority which had voted against the idea of self-control of the press through legislation had amounted to more than one-third of the members.

Mr. Schulte did not think that the dangers threatening press



freedom in Germany were a peculiarly German phenomenon. But they could be dangerous because the time-lag between democracy and total dictatorship had been too short and the transition could only be achieved completely by the rising generation. Much would depend on what happened in Germany in the next 30 or 40 years. If people who had learned nothing continued to work to undermine faith in the ideals of democracy and its economic future, the smallest crisis could let loose a dangerous political reaction. That would affect above all the foundations of a press which was still economically weak and destroy it as a pillar of democracy. But at present the danger was more inherent in the attitude of the press itself than in the actions of government and bureaucracy. The press regarded itself too little as the "fourth estate" and too much as an extension of government, bureaucracy or party.

MR. TAKATA said that the Japanese press had gone through many difficult days in the past, particularly during the war, but he did not think it necessary to go in detail into this history. The restoration of complete sovereignty in April 1952 had paved the way to full freedom of the press in Japan, aided by the nation's determination to put into practice the principles of the new constitution of 1947 guaranteeing the freedom of the press. It was also helped by steps taken during the Allied Occupation, whereby existing laws and regulations which had been used before and during the war to curb the freedom of the press were totally abolished. He ventured to say that, as a result, the Japanese press enjoyed as much freedom as could be expected in any good democratic state.

With the gradual economic rehabilitation of the country the press had also regained its virility in the forthright presentation of both domestic and international news over a wide range and in playing a positive role as an independent organ fostering and leading public opinion. In Japan today there were 179 daily newspapers compared with 57 in 1945 when the war ended. Their total daily circulation was well over 34,500,000 copies, which meant roughly one copy per 2 ½ persons of the total population of 86 millions.

Competition among Japanese newspapers was free and very

keen—sometimes too keen. Two years before, one or two of the larger metropolitan newspapers had started free gift schemes to promote sales by giving away kitchen utensils and organising raffles for washing machines and so on. It was a very silly idea, but it had worked for a time. So most of the other big newspapers followed suit with the inevitable outcome that they all suffered heavy losses. Several months before, they had met and agreed to return to saner methods of competition.

Though today the Japanese press enjoyed freedom, there had been evidence for some time of a tendency on the part of the Japanese Government to restrict free access to news with the ultimate idea of controlling the press. The Japanese press had reacted strongly and was putting up unceasing opposition to the attempt.

### Press Warning to Government

He could best give an idea of the nature of the attempt and the latest reaction by referring his hearers to a resolution unanimously adopted the previous October by the annual convention of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association. This resolution said: "The various government agencies are tending to restrict the freedom of the press under the pretext of safeguarding security. Experience shows, however, that such an official tendency, while keeping the people ill at ease about what they do and say in their daily life, serves to bring heavy pressure to bear on their right to know. Inasmuch as freedom of discussion is indispensable to the promotion and development of society, the National Newspaper Convention hereby registers vehement opposition to all sorts of legislation deemed liable to impede newsgathering and reporting under the disguise of safeguarding security."

There had been two phases to this government trend. One, which became known some two years before, had been the proposal for an official cabinet information bureau to collect and possibly distribute domestic and foreign news. The Japanese press had immediately objected in the belief that this might develop into a government news monopoly and eventually into thought control. The Japanese had had a very bitter experience during the war when the government had set up an official information bureau and expanded its scope to bring in the Domei News Agency in

order to unify domestic and foreign news and consequently public opinion.

The post-war plan for an official information bureau had aroused such strong criticism in both press and parliament that the government had had to abandon its original project.

Nevertheless, it had soon tried to produce a substitute by expanding something called the Cabinet Investigation Office for a similar purpose, and to this end the government had earmarked an annual appropriation of 120,000,000 yen (\$ 333,000), for the fiscal year 1953. Nothing further had happened, however, as the lower house had been dissolved for a new election before parliament could take the matter up.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ogata, who had been linked with the original plan, denied in the Diet the possibility of government control of news through a government-managed news agency, but he explained that the government might ask for a somewhat larger budget for the Cabinet Investigation Office for 1954.

Another plan was recently reported to be in the mind of the government. This was to set up a "news centre" with private capital for supplying news to the government and to those newspapers, news agencies and radio stations which wanted it. The press considered that such a news centre would either duplicate commercial news sources in existence or replace them with a powerful government instrument for controlling the news.

## Military Secrets Law

He would deal very briefly with the government's attempt to restrict press freedom by enacting a new law. Soon after the Japanese Government had created the national police reserve in July 1950, it wanted to have a sort of military secrets law with the intention of safeguarding national security. To this the Japanese press immediately voiced strong objection. In July last year the board of directors of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association issued a statement on the position. It pointed out that if such a law were enacted, various government agencies would inevitably expand the scope of what they called official secrets, thereby restricting press freedom. It demanded that the government should give up the type of undemocratic measure that was liable to bring heavy pressure to bear on freedom of

speech and the press. Now, with the signing of an agreement with the United States for American military aid, it seemed almost inevitable that the government would have to enact a law to safeguard the arms, services and information it received from the United States.

There was also a government plan to enact an anti-subversive law to meet the totalitarian dangers from the extreme right and left wings. This also was liable to develop into restriction on the freedom of the press. Some people had said that the potential government threat to the freedom of the press had been exaggerated, but the fact was that a danger did exist.

The Japanese press was watching these developments closely and was ready to fight any attempt to restrict freedom of the press. He appealed to the Institute to follow with close interest developments in Japan and to give the press there strong moral support, because the question was not a matter for Japan only but was of vital concern to the whole free world.

MR. RIVETT said that certain geographical and historical facts were important for understanding the problems of press and government in Australia. The first fact was that there were only nine million people inhabiting a territory of three million square miles, which meant that the newspaper's biggest problem was to reach the population. In his own state, for example, his paper was trying to reach the 780,000 inhabitants who occupied a greater area than the 86 million potential readers of Mr. Takata's paper in Japan.

This was the overriding factor distinguishing the Australian press from that in Europe and most other countries in the world. It explained why there was no Australian national daily or weekly paper, other than sporting or women's journals. The most a publisher could hope to do was to circulate in one city and the surrounding state. Even with the aid of modern transport facilities nobody had solved the problem of competing with the newspaper on the spot.

The next important fact in Australia was that the Australians were the most governed people in the world. For nine million people they had seven parliaments (with 13 houses of parliament)



and he could not say how many city and municipal governments. Pressure on the newspaper was therefore considerable at all levels. There was direct pressure from the Federal Government in Canberra, there was the even more direct pressure from the state governments, which were usually situated in the capital cities in which the newspapers were published, and finally there was the pressure from the city governments, which was naturally of first importance for circulation.

There were many ways in which city governments and their officials who came under fire of a newspaper's criticism could make themselves extremely unpleasant to those who were trying to sell the paper ; he did not need to detail methods to his present audience.

Experience in recent months had shown how extremely sensitive and irritable local dignitaries in Australia could be. As an example he cited the quarrel which had come to a head in the closing months of 1953 in Sydney, New South Wales, between the two morning papers there and the Labour Government. The quarrel was the outcome of violent conflict for a year over newspaper charges of corruption at Sydney city hall. The tradition in the Australian press, though it was less marked today, was for newspapers to divide along party lines and the whole dispute in Sydney was very much a party affair, following the line of cleavage between a generally non-Labour press and a Labour Government.

### Free-for-All Tactics

The attack had been conducted in normal Australian fashion with front-page leaders and exposés in the press. This kind of free-for-all might be regarded as vulgar and crude abroad, perhaps, but that was the way things were done in Australia and the Australians liked it that way.

The upshot was that the New South Wales Government introduced a press law which would have ended press freedom in Australia overnight. It would have forced an editor or a newspaper to disclose sources of information, not only from the time the law came into force, but retrospectively for months past.

The entire Australian press—heartily supported by the British press—spoke up with one voice to say that such a law would be

the end of a democratic press as it had existed in Australia for fifty years and was the antithesis of all that the founding fathers who had formed the Commonwealth had sought in 1900.

The case was fought out before a learned judge in chambers and he threw the bill out on the technical ground that it was physically and legally impossible for a newspaper as an entity to disclose its sources of information just as it was impossible for a newspaper to drive a car.

Though this bill had failed through faulty drafting, it must not be imagined that the danger to press freedom had ended with the judge's decision. It was still possible that a qualified cabinet minister, with more leisure and better legal advice, would introduce a law which would make it possible for police to arrest and hold an editor who refused to divulge his sources of information under the threat of being deprived of his liberty or paying a heavy fine.

This was a very grim threat to the press and was all the grimmer because a leading politician who might one day become deputy premier had stated that if ever he did come to power he would make things exceedingly unhealthy for a free press. Mr. Rivett did not want to be alarmist, but he said that they must all be on the alert and he appealed to the vigilance and support of editors, through the International Press Institute, to help the Australian press if ever that was needed.

Because the press in Australia was subject to influence from federal, state and city governments, it was of the utmost importance that the newspapers should be completely free of these insidious pressures.

## Resisting Political Blackmail

Official pressure was a familiar experience to the Australian editor. The ease with which it was possible to blackmail him must be appreciated. Contacts between press and government were very close. When a politician who was accustomed to support from the local press found a newspaper, which perhaps was going into the homes of two-thirds of his constituents, swinging against him, he yielded to a human instinct and retaliated by saying that in future he would release important government stories only to friendly newspapers.

What could an editor do about political blackmail? The

solution Mr. Rivett suggested was for the editor to fight back tooth and nail and tell his readers what was going on. He was convinced that a great deal could be done by keeping the reader informed because the public did resent attempts to dictate to the press.

Recently an attempt had been made to gain a monopoly hold in his territory against his group of papers. His newspaper had denounced what was going on in a front-page leader and the result had been an increase in readership while the rival group had gone on losing money. The sole reason was that his paper told the public all the facts and when the opposition came to tell its story, the public did not regard it as satisfactory. The public in this case was opposed to the idea of a press monopoly in its territory and in the same way the public would reject any attempt at government monopoly of the news. An editor's only protection against government pressure lay in taking his readers into his confidence and giving them all the facts all the time.

### *Discussion from the Floor*

EDMUND RICHNER (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*) said that governments were certainly afraid of the press and this fear produced a climate which was not conducive to the mutual confidence between government and press which was needed in democratic countries. This applied also to Switzerland, where the institutions gave the people a great say in the government of the country and consequently made the freedom of the press a pillar of Swiss democracy.

Distrust of the press did not take the form of efforts to restrict press freedom by actual laws, but showed itself rather in attempts to put obstacles in the way of the press as it did its work. The chief of these was the problem of free access to news.

In Switzerland both federal and cantonal governments were reluctant to let the press know what they were doing and placed barriers in the way of the press in carrying out its duty of informing the public. It was true that press conferences were held, but only when the government wanted to use the press to pass on information for which it sought publicity. There were none of those useful and necessary press conferences which gave journalists the opportunity of asking the government questions which might

be embarrassing. He could cite a number of examples in which information about draft proposals, decisions and actions by the government had reached the Swiss press from abroad. For instance, there was the question of Switzerland's foreign relations, particularly when the country became a member of the United Nations Armistice Commission in Korea. Over and over again reports of Swiss diplomatic activity came from Washington and the Swiss press was unable to get direct information about them. There were similar difficulties when trade negotiations were taking place. When something happened which was of interest only to the Swiss, the public often heard nothing about it because the news was not channelled through other countries.

A second problem in Switzerland was the new draft of the article in the federal constitution which guaranteed press freedom. Press and parliament were in dispute about this because journalists wanted the article to stipulate the rights of the press, whereas parliament wanted to set down the duties of the press. Journalists thought that they should exercise their duties of their own free will, but believed that their rights should be included in the constitution. Mr. Richner said that he was convinced that the exchange of experiences among editors through the IPI would help to bring about a solution which would still further strengthen the freedom of the press in Switzerland.

## Communism and U.S. Editors

LESTER MARKEL (*The New York Times*) said that he wished to refer to a question which Mr. Broughton had asked of American editors. Referring to a statement at the previous day's discussion by Mr. Harris that an editor had the right to make a fool of himself, Mr. Broughton had asked whether American editors would defend the right of an editor to make a Communist of himself. The answer was Yes. America had a Communist newspaper which appeared every day. The Communist Party in the United States had a constitutional existence and anybody who wanted to be a Communist could be one. Further, balloting was secret and there were a number of people who voted Communist. In the recent past, when newsprint had been short, *The New York Times* had loaned 12 tons of it to the *Daily Worker*.

The question was really how many Americans chose to exercise



the right. This was a different problem and brought the discussion round to the question of McCarthyism. Mr. Markel regretted that it was impossible to go into the question at this point and discuss the treatment of McCarthyism in the American and the world press, because it was a vital problem. He did not defend McCarthyism and there were many other American editors who also did not do this. On the other hand, Mr. Markel thought that it was not clearly appreciated in many parts of the world that the Hiss case had made a tremendous impact on American public opinion. Fundamentally the American people were sound and though he suspected they were quick to make mistakes, they were also quick to correct them when necessary.

### Editors' Hazards in Burma

E. M. LAW YONE (*The Nation*, Rangoon) said that he probably represented the smallest newspaper among all the editors present. But, though it had a circulation of only 10,000, it was a national newspaper. Burma had a very small press, a new press and also a new regime. Both government and press were extremely jealous of their rights.

The position in Burma was peculiar in that the question of rights was bound up with a constitution which the country had inherited from the British. Burma had extremely strict press laws. For example, under one ordinance the police had powers to break into any premises without a warrant. There was also the Peace and Order Preservation Act under which people could be held in jail without trial for a period of up to six months. As a result, seven out of the ten leading editors had been jailed. He himself had been convicted, but not actually put in prison ; this did not mean much, however, as he was still invited to the President's house.

The government was a very young and sensitive government. It also controlled 90 per cent of the seats in parliament ; there was no effective opposition there and it was left to the press to act as the opposition. Consequently, there had been a constant clash between the press and the government. The government took the view that the press was not sufficiently responsible and the press took the view that the government was not sufficiently capable.

He had been glad to learn that the International Press Institute was planning active help for his colleagues in Indonesia. As for Burma, he did not think the press there needed any help—not even moral support—because it stood on its own feet and could help itself. But the Burmese press would like help to obtain better machinery. He asked any of those present who had good machinery available, because they were buying more modern equipment, to let the Burmese have it. They would pay for it by instalments or on liberal terms.

An American friend had told him that democracy was real in the United States because the government was afraid of the press. In Burma the government was not afraid of the press, but neither was the press afraid of the government. As a democratic journalist he could work under such conditions. He could even work in a country where the press was afraid of the government because that presented a challenge which brought out a journalist's best qualities, but he could not work in a country where the government was the press.

### Britain's Press Council

R. P. T. GIBSON (Westminster Press Provincial Newspapers, London) said that most of the speakers had appealed for moral support and he was sure that the chief value of these discussions lay in the fact that they offered mutual encouragement and moral support. The form which the discussions had taken was inevitably, and rightly, the reporting by various editors of experiences in their own countries. He therefore proposed to say a few words about the recent establishment of a Press Council in England. He added that his hearers should be told at the outset that he was a member of the Council, as they might feel that his views were coloured.

The origin of the Press Council had been in a report from the Royal Commission on the Press which, while its investigations had exonerated the British press from most of the more serious charges levelled against it, had stated that most newspapers failed to supply the electorate with adequate materials for sound political judgment; and further, the competitive nature of the industry had prevented the press as a whole from keeping pace with the needs of modern society. The Commission recognised the dangers of legislation and

its report had therefore proposed that the press should take collective action to deal with the shortcomings. In particular it recommended the creation of a Council which would help to maintain freedom of the press and the integrity on which that freedom must depend.

There had, of course, been differences of opinion. Three years had passed before the Council was launched, but the factors which had united people of differing views had been fear of what might happen if a Council was not formed and the feeling that such a body might act as a bulwark against encroachments on freedom. Many felt too that the press was in a weak strategic position ; mass circulation-getting methods had destroyed, in his opinion, the respect in which the British press used to be held. The old attitude that what was in the papers must be true no longer obtained. The press therefore felt that it must show willing by putting its own house in order, if it was to get the public on its side.

He had been particularly interested in Mr. Broughton's statement that in South Africa the public did not care when the press was attacked. If the press were to survive in the eternal battle between newspapers and governments it must get the public on its side or forfeit the respect which was its chief bulwark against governments.

There had been many difficulties and much hostility to the Press Council and some of the great newspapers had not taken part in its formation. It had been said that the press was fashioning a dangerous instrument which could be used against it. His answer was that time alone would show.

## Problems of Status and Sanctions

What had the Council done ? What were its weaknesses and its strength ? It was a representative body drawn from managerial, editorial, professional associations etc. and therefore was a cross section of the press and not a collection of its most distinguished members. It was rather like a jury and insofar as it had a quasi-judicial role it was working fairly well, but if one expected it to give leadership to the press, he did not think it was a very appropriate body. Secondly, it must be remembered that the Council was a voluntary body. It had no official status or basis in law and it had no sanctions but the weapon of publicity. Only time would

show how powerful a weapon publicity was. If this weapon was inadequate the Council would fail.

Those who distrusted it thought that it was bound to fail and it would then be given teeth, which would mean the end of press freedom. The debate was a very real one in which he would be the last to say that all the right was on one side. The Council had been attacked for holding its meetings privately. He sympathised with that attack, but there was the difficulty that witnesses speaking before it had no legal protection. The British press naturally wanted to keep the Council on a voluntary basis, but the Council had no privilege and no protection against libel, and therefore it was not known how far it could use its powers of censure with impunity.

### Reader's Right of Reply

JOSEF FELDER (*Südost-Kurier*, Bad Reichenhall) spoke of the part representatives of the press and publishers had played in the drafting of the press law in Bavaria. By their cooperation, they had achieved modifications in the draft, which had originally been much too bureaucratic. Bavaria today had a press law which could be described without hesitation as the most progressive press law in the Federal Republic. The law guaranteed maximum freedom of the press and Bavarian journalists and publishers had frequently stated that if there must be a federal press law, it should be based on the Bavarian press law.

However, the Bavarian press law contained a strange provision about the publication of replies in matters of dispute. A person criticised in a newspaper could send his reply to the newspaper which the latter had to publish even when the statements contained in the reply were untrue. If, however, the editorial staff or the publisher found that those statements were false, they could sue their author.

This provision gave rise to certain doubts because it opened the way for attacks not only on private individuals, but also on the state. Mr. Felder had had a case in which, at the time when the criticised person's reply reached him, he already had sufficient proof in his hands to show that it contained entirely untrue statements. As an experiment, he had therefore decided not to publish the reply as the law demanded. He was now involved in a law suit



because the law formally demanded publication under all circumstances. Mr. Felder said he hoped the suit would show the danger of this provision.

In the Federal Parliament, there were representatives of all parties who did not feel very friendly towards the press. However, it was not so much the Federal and Länder authorities who were fighting the press as the local authorities, who used the method of preventing access to information. The situation varied from place to place, and in some communities the position was favourable to the press.

Mr. Felder said that any attack on the freedom of the press and on free access to information should be resisted primarily on the local level, because the local community was the cell of the state and when an attack was made on the press by the local authorities, it was the duty of the press to take strong counter-measures.

## Censorship in War and Peace

CHARLES EADE (*Sunday Dispatch*, London) said that he wished to refer to Mr. Law Yone's point that the British had bequeathed some extremely stringent press regulations to Burma. He did not quite understand whether these repressive laws had always existed in Burma or whether, as he suspected, they were merely temporary war emergency measures. It was a common experience that governments introduced restrictive laws under the guise of war measures. For example, the press in Britain had been made subject during the war to a voluntary censorship, but this had been dropped at the end of hostilities. It would be a very bad thing if newspapers continued to accept these restrictions, introduced for reasonable motives during the war, after the emergency had ended.

Mr. Law Yone said that Mr. Eade's point was important. The President of the Union of Burma had retained these measures, as successor to the Governor of Burma, because they served the government's purpose. The press had no support in parliament and therefore it could not be expected that the laws would be repealed. He could, however, assure everyone present that these regulations would die of disuse—they would atrophy.

ANDERS INGVE PERS (*Uästmanlands Läns Tidning*, Västerås) said that press freedom in Sweden had been protected by law for a century and a half. Some years previously several modifications

had been introduced and in particular one point had been brought up to date. It was now laid down not only that the journalist could not be expected to reveal his sources of information, but that he had an actual duty not to reveal those sources. This, he thought, was an important point to stress in any new press laws, particularly nowadays when the editor and owner of a newspaper were no longer the same person.

The owner might, for example, be a big business man or a political party—the latter type of ownership was common in small countries and sometimes the editor was not sufficiently independent of his party. As long as an editor merely had the right to keep his sources of information confidential, the owner—business man or party—might put pressure on him to reveal the source. But if it was established by law that the editor was in duty bound not to reveal his sources, it was a considerable protection.

At the same time, it might happen that the journalist would abuse this right. An example of this had happened recently in Sweden, when a journalist had revealed what somebody had said to him though he had been given the information in his capacity not as a journalist but as a private person. The rest of the press had criticised him severely for this action—which was the surest way of preventing a recurrence of such an incident.

## Setting Limits to Press Freedom

E. CARLEBACH (*Maariv*, Tel Aviv) said that two questions had occurred to him during the discussion. First, was not the meeting really concerned with a crisis in democracy in general, and therefore was it really finding the correct answer to the question where the limits to press freedom should be set? He had been much impressed, for example, by Mr. Markel's statement that *The New York Times* had loaned newsprint to the Communist *Daily Worker*. But this raised the question whether *The New York Times* would go to the length of bailing out a contributor to that paper because he had exercised his right to press freedom and written in it. Again, would his German colleague really advocate a press law which would enable the Nazi paper *Völkischer Beobachter* to appear again? Finally, would it really be possible in South Africa to enact a press law which would give complete freedom to the natives of Cape Province, even at the risk of inciting them to violence?

The question really was what they regarded as the limits of press freedom, what rights the government had to restrict it and what boundaries the press must set itself. This was a problem which was exercising most European and other countries which did not have the longstanding tradition, which Britain and the Scandinavian countries had, of democratic self-control on the part of both reader and journalist. It was useless to protest freedom of the press, pass resolutions about it and try to set up international bodies which adopted resolutions for the free flow of information, before a definite answer had been given to this question, which was being perpetually posed to the press by all governments.

### Israel's Press Law Committee

In Israel, there was considerable freedom, in fact unlimited freedom of expression, and the government had been clever enough to appoint a representative of the press (Mr. Carlebach himself) to serve on the committee which was devising a press law. But he had been asked in the committee what he would do if somebody published in the press secret information affecting the security of Israel. Would that come under the heading of the freedom of the press which a journalist could claim as a democratic right? He had also been asked what he would do, for example, if somebody advised people not to serve in the army and so on. Did that kind of behaviour merit protection?

A second problem had been put to him—the question of punishment for transgression of the proper limits of press freedom. Suppose it was agreed that a newspaper was sacred and could not be closed down. If one could not close the newspaper, one would have to punish the editor by jailing or fining him. A government had to have some measure of control. The question of an editor who had the moral courage to go to prison for his convictions was a very touchy one.

The meetings, discussions and resolutions on freedom of the press were, in his view, rather unrealistic unless editors made up their minds, so far as they could, what responsibility they took upon themselves and what risks they were prepared to undergo for a free press. In other words, where did they ask for unlimited freedom and where must one draw the natural boundaries to it in the modern world?

HAMID NIZAMI (*Nawa-i-Wagt*, Lahore) said that relations between press and government in Pakistan were neither particularly good nor particularly bad. The government had a great respect for press freedom, as ministers were perpetually reminding the public in their speeches. Nevertheless, in practice, the government was afraid of press criticism and at least some of the ministers were hostile to it.

There was no formal censorship and the government did not dictate what newspapers should or should not write, but there was a rather strict press law which gave the government considerable powers. For example, it could suspend a newspaper for a year, thereby exercising a form of censorship, and publishers and editors could be put in prison. On other hand, the present government had not invoked this law for more than two years and the previous government had not used it very often. The individual state governments were not so easy to deal with. His own newspapers had often suffered from unofficial censorship and three newspapers he had edited had been suppressed one after another. He had been twice arrested, but not actually jailed.

Nevertheless, the press was not particularly pessimistic about the future. The State of Pakistan was only seven years old and time was needed to develop the traditions which held good elsewhere in the world. The Pakistanis were a sound, democratic and freedom-loving people and therefore it could be expected that in the near future they would build a really free press in a really democratic country.

### Answer to Limiting Freedom

URS SCHWARZ (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*), answering Dr. Carlebach's question about where the limits to press freedom should be set, said that this was a question which was repeatedly asked by people who did not really have the interests of press freedom at heart. The answer was simple : it was that the limits of press freedom, as of any freedom, must be set only at that point where they were needed to protect the existence of the state.

He proposed that, before the Assembly concluded its business, it should carry a resolution embodying the principal points made in the present discussion. (*See further page 96.*)



SVEN AAGE LUND (*Berlingske Tidende*, Copenhagen) said that in the Scandinavian countries comparatively little difficulty had been experienced because freedom of the press was constitutionally guaranteed. Consequently, friendly relations between press and government existed, but that was not enough. The press must have the support of public opinion and therefore must be self-critical and keep within its proper limits.

He agreed with Dr. Schwarz that the result of the discussion should be contained in a formal statement, because it was extremely important to know what was being done in different countries in order that the editors of the Institute could support their colleagues in all countries where difficulties were being experienced. They would like to have the facts about which countries needed the support of others, which new countries were facing dangers to press freedom and in which countries relations between press and government were not as good as in other countries.

Closing the discussion, Dr. Pollak said that sufficient had been heard during the meeting to indicate that the problem of the freedom of the press was not one which affected the journalistic profession only, but was an international problem. It had often been said that the price of freedom was eternal vigilance. He would only add that the vigilance must also be international.

# THE MERITS AND DRAWBACKS OF FULL CRIME REPORTING

AFTERNOON SESSION—WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

## *Panel Discussion*

Chairman : A. P. WADSWORTH, Editor, *Manchester Guardian*

Speakers : MAARTEN ROOY, Editor,  
*Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*

HANS HOFF, Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry,  
Vienna University

JAMES KERNEY Jr., Editor, *Trenton Times News-  
papers*, New Jersey

FLORENT LOUWAGE, President of the International  
Criminal Police Commission (Interpol)

MR. WADSWORTH said that crime reporting was an extremely complex subject. The more one studied it, the more one saw how practices differed from one country to another, partly through varying attitudes to private morals, partly through different systems of law—for example, whether there was trial by jury or not—partly through different traditions.

Of the panel speakers Dr. Rooy, from Holland, came from a country where crime reporting was rather restrictive. That was one side of the picture. On the other side, Mr. Kerney, of the United States, was from a country where there was fairly open reporting, though naturally there were restrictions on complete freedom of crime reporting.

In addition, the meeting would hear two experts—Professor Hoff, of Vienna, who would say something about relations between press publicity and crime from the viewpoint of a psychologist, and M. Louwage, who would say what the police thought about the press and how the latter helped or hindered them.

DR. ROOY said that a statement of general principle was necessary to explain the policy of restraint in crime reporting in the Netherlands.

Crime reporting was an extremely important subject to all editors, not primarily because of the reader's curiosity to be informed about the details of crime but because it was the basic task of the newspaper to report news and no newspaper could completely ignore the public need for information about crime.

By reporting crime and the administration of justice the press was constantly encouraging the general feeling that crime did not pay. Even more important, the reader thereby was given the strong impression that public order was being maintained and that he also would be protected against infringements of his personal freedom. In a world in which governments were steadily encroaching on personal liberties by such measures as conscription and high taxation, everything must be done to keep alive the idea of democratic freedom, and crime reporting played its part in this.

Therefore the policy of restraint in the Netherlands did not mean that Dutch editors did not realise the general importance of crime reporting, but they advocated a certain restraint because of the implications of full reporting.

### Liberal Dutch Libel Law

The Dutch press was under no legal restraints in this matter and full press freedom was constitutionally guaranteed and protected by the courts. On the other hand, the press was not exempt from the common law that applied to every citizen in such matters as libel ; but he would add that libel procedure was much less strict than it was, for example, in England. In the few criminal cases that had been brought against journalists, sentences had been very mild and in civil actions damages had been only token. There was a further reason why the Dutch editor might feel at liberty to give the fullest reporting of crime ; that was that his country did not know contempt of court as an offence.

There was, in fact, only one legal restriction on crime reporting. In cases of sexual crime Dutch law permitted the court to proceed *in camera*. The charge and the sentence were given in public, but the cases for prosecution and defence and the testimony of witnesses were heard behind closed doors. This was the

usual practice in the Netherlands and the press did not report sexual crime cases, merely publishing the sentences in very brief form.

This was in accordance with the general conception of public morals in his country, which lay at the heart of the practice of restricted crime reporting. The puritanical strain in the Dutch national character, inherited from the days of the religious wars, had survived into modern times.

Another trait in the national character was the strong individualism. The idea of the privacy of the individual citizen and his family was so strong that social life was relatively weak and the Dutch did not know the more or less obligatory social standards which prevailed, for example, in the United States. The Dutchman claimed his right to privacy and therefore the Dutch press had practically no social or gossip columns. The newspapers respected this demand for privacy and even pictures of so-called society weddings were rather rare.

These trends towards sobriety in the Dutch press were further influenced by the newspaper circulation system. As 90 to 95 per cent of newspapers were sold by subscription, the small street sales did not encourage campaigns by the more popular newspapers to increase their circulation and so the Netherlands did not know a real boulevard or "yellow" press. Generally, the journalistic difference between quality and popular papers was less than in other countries. This might explain why crime reporting, though an essential part of the news, did not get a prominent place in newspaper columns.

## Commission on Crime Reporting

Recently the whole problem of crime reporting had been considered by a joint commission of pressmen, public prosecutors and police authorities, and the resulting report had been discussed at a meeting of the group of editors-in-chief in the Federation of Dutch Journalists. A specific questionnaire had been answered by the many editors who attended this meeting, so that Dr. Rooy was in a position to give a representative summary of Dutch editors' opinion.

The chairman of the joint commission, a professor of criminal law, had tried to force a rather curious conception of crime report-



ing on the members. He had contended that the best thing for the press was to keep completely silent about crime. Fortunately this view had been rejected, but, in trying to compromise with the chairman, the majority had put the case for the press in a rather weak way. They had said that crime reporting should be considered as a necessary evil.

The group of editors-in-chief had taken a stronger and more positive attitude. They thought that crime reporting contributed to the maintenance of the fundamental conception of democratic order and freedom. Further, a responsible news service on crime was the best way to prevent rumours from spreading uncontrolled. Suppression of news that was fit to print was always a bad form of journalism.

## Editors Demand Discretion

In the opinion of Dutch editors, the fitness of criminal news to be printed depended on the circumstances. While they were ready to observe restraint in breaking news about a crime, if it was apparent that detection would be harmed by the publication of certain facts, they reserved the right to judge the circumstances and thought they could only do so if the police and the public prosecutor took the press into their confidence. Generally, relations between police and press were very good and newspapers refrained from investigating criminal cases on their own. Exceptions were made if uneasiness arose about the apparent inertia of the police.

Dutch editors considered details of crime not fit to be printed if they caused unfair damage to the suspected person. Consequently the Dutch press usually referred to suspects only by the initials of their names ; exceptionally the full name was given when the case involved well-known people, authorities or notorious criminals. Generally, publication of a full name, even after sentence had been pronounced, was regarded as aggravating official punishment and hampering probation.

The Dutch press also observed restraint if it felt that too detailed a description of a crime would have an undesirable psychological effect on certain groups of readers, especially on youth or mentally deficient persons. For example, reporting of arson or the ingenious tricks of master burglars was usually restricted.

In general, crime reporting was limited to the facts and the

occasional practice of publishing the full story of notorious cases by the popular press was regarded by many Dutch journalists as being in bad taste.

The general tendency to restraint was influenced by two other special circumstances. The first was the relatively low frequency of crime. There had been a slight increase compared with the situation before World War II, but crimes of violence and sex were not predominant, so that the press did not feel bound to pay too much attention to crime. The second was the fact that the Netherlands had no jury system. In his opinion, the jury system stimulated public interest in criminal cases and forced the press to cater to this interest.

MR. KERNEY insisted at the outset on the absolute necessity of full press freedom, whether or not the editor exercised it, to the kind of journalism people had come to accept in the United States. There was no such thing as half freedom.

In the United States freedom to report crime was guaranteed by the first amendment to the constitution, safeguarding the freedom of the press. It was also considerably influenced by two other amendments—the sixth, which provided for public trial, and the fourteenth, which guaranteed equality in due process of the law. Further, there was a natural corollary to freedom of the press; that was the freedom of the people to be informed, which meant access to the news through the press.

That was why the American Society of Newspaper Editors had set up a committee on freedom of information to support editors in their local problems vis-à-vis the authorities. There was perhaps too much government at all levels in the 48 states of the Union and this led to a natural inclination on the part of office holders to think that they had a proprietary interest in their affairs and the right to withhold information from the press. The committee had been helpful in obtaining mass support for local editors fighting against restrictions. A small dent had also been made in the complete wall of secrecy surrounding atomic energy developments; he agreed that security in this field required some secrecy but he thought, in common with many American editors, that secrecy had been carried too far.

This preface on the general state of press freedom in the United

States was necessary to explain the attitude of American editors to crime coverage. American provincial editors, who were the most numerous group of editors in the States and whose papers taken together had the highest circulation, did not choose, on the whole, to use the most salacious items that came out of crime news, as a matter of taste ; but they were united in defending the right of the "yellow" press to use as much as they chose of this kind of news, because they shared a common conviction that any trend to restriction would help to destroy the freedom which they all had at heart.

As an example of this common front, Mr. Kerney cited the case of Minot Jelke, in which a young and wealthy man had been accused of promoting prostitution. When the tabloid press began to report the charges in detail and the judge closed the court to the press, those editors who would not have been interested themselves in the use of anything but a few bare details, sprang to the defence of the press in New York. On the closing of the court one newspaper had commented : "The facts in the case were not pretty ; they will now be replaced by rumours even uglier"—and that was precisely what had happened.

American editors as a whole were extremely conscious of their duties as citizens of a democracy. That was why he contended that the printing of crime news in some detail was an absolute requisite ; the newspaper was in some respects the current history book of the average citizen. Through its reporting of crime news the citizen was able to judge whether his government and police were effective and whether justice was being dispensed with equality.

## Critic of American Court Procedure

Mr. Kerney said that he did not go as far as some of his colleagues who would, for example, like court rooms opened for the taking of pictures ; speaking as a member of the Institute of Judicial Administration, he felt that this practice would lower the dignity of one of the major arms of American constitutional government. On the other hand, in common with several other American editors, he was often critical of the way in which courts operated. Unfortunately, lawyers and judges were prone to assume that they had a proprietary interest in the law and that they owned the courts. It was the duty of a newspaper occasionally

to remind them that all they had was a licence from the public to perform certain duties and responsibilities. This was a point he had frequently made in the States and he usually phrased it less delicately. As a result, he had been twice convicted of libel in his twenty years in journalism.

## “Trial by Newspapers”

There was one point in American legal procedure which was different from the practice in many other countries. That was the pre-trial examination, which was an effort made in a number of State courts to speed up the process of justice by having the obvious facts of the case brought out in advance before a hearing examiner. An effort was being made at present by the Bar Association in New York State to exclude the press from pre-trial examinations on the ground that there was too much “trial by newspapers.” This was a phrase which had become a cliché in the States and he felt it was often used by lawyers who would rather not have their affairs brought out before the public. He did not think that the Bar Association’s move would get far because the State Society of Newspaper Editors in New York had gone to work energetically to block it. The case against closing any phase of a public trial to the press had been well summed up in a phrase in the State Society’s report. It had said : “It would automatically weaken law enforcement and increase the opportunities for concealment, collusion and the miscarriage of justice.” Though he did not think that the Bar Association’s effort would succeed, he had cited it as typical of the kind of thing against which those interested in press freedom in the United States had constantly to be on guard.

Mr. Kerney said that several changes were occurring in the practice of crime reporting in the United States. For instance, most newspapers had pursued the policy for many years of withholding the names of juveniles accused or convicted of crimes when they were below the age of 17, on the ground that naming them might mar their later life and not assist the system of probation. During the past year at least half-a-dozen responsible newspapers spread across the country had abandoned this policy on the ground that there had been an increase in juvenile crime and that the withholding of names had not contributed to its reduction. These news-



papers felt that the publication of the names might help to deter the young criminal. On his own newspaper names were still withheld but he was not sure which was the right policy. The change in practice was, however, a sign of the seriousness with which American editors viewed their public responsibility.

American newspapers did cooperate with the police, though on occasion it was hard to decide whether a newspaper should give or refuse such cooperation. He instanced a recent case of kidnapping in San Francisco, about which there had been considerable discussion. A wealthy young man had been kidnapped and, in collusion with the police, the local newspapers had withheld the news for over 60 hours, on the argument that silence would assist the detection of the kidnappers and the safety of the kidnapped person. The result had been happy in that the kidnappers had been caught and the man released unharmed : but Mr. Kerney was not sure that the newspapers had pursued the right course, nor were the newspapers of San Francisco. The *San Francisco Chronicle*, for example, had cooperated but had been the most restive under the arrangement and had been on the point of breaking the news when the kidnappers were caught. This case presented a real problem of how far a newspaper should go in cooperating with the authorities in enforcing the law.

## Evidence of Circulation Trends

There was sound ground for the theory that all news should be grist for the newspaper's mill and that, particularly in competitive areas, the playing up of a story acquired readers. Nevertheless, he did not agree entirely with the theory and the circulation trend in his own area seemed to bear him out. The more sensational newspapers in New York had been consistently losing circulation for some time, while more conservative newspapers on the fringes of the metropolitan area had been consistently gaining circulation. Therefore there seemed to be some evidence for the belief that the public did not necessarily demand sensation from its newspapers.

He ended with a quotation from a court in the State of Ohio which, in his opinion, summed up the principle on which the American press worked. Commenting on a judge who had wished to withhold certain news of his court from the press, the Supreme

Court had stated : "The phrase 'liberty of the press' in the Ohio state constitution and the phrase 'freedom of the press' in the Constitution of the United States carry not only the right to print, publish and circulate the news of the day but also the right to gather news from all legitimate sources."

PROFESSOR HOFF said that he had always followed the rule in his work that the press should be fully informed of all the scientific findings gathered in his clinic. Too often an aura of mystery surrounded psychiatry, and books and the cinema had done much to contribute to this attitude. On the other hand, in his experience the Austrian press had done a great deal to dispel this aura of mystery and nowadays it did not happen often that a tragedy occurred because people were afraid of consulting a psychiatrist in time.

The fundamental question was : Why did people commit crimes ? His audience would probably reply : Because they had been subjected to temptation. There was a widespread belief that laws and precautionary measures had been drawn up simply to prevent the whole human race from becoming criminals. This was an entirely false notion. A man did not become a criminal as a result of one single factor but through a process of development and possibly heredity. If a man became a criminal, it was because of some peculiarity in his general development, which made him anti-social.

It was a mistake to think that environment was responsible for pushing a person into a dead end. Environment was not a dead thing ; every individual created his own environment which in turn influenced him, and that in turn influenced the further development of the environment the man created for himself.

But the question remained ; Why was it that only a certain limited number of roads were open to a person ? In a man's development, there were certain periods when he was most open to the influence of outside impressions, though the impressions did not have an effect until much later. The ages between four and six years and again between ten and twelve were such periods. They were not concerned with the first of these periods, but, during the second, sensual impressions—including those gained from

newspaper reports—became deeply engraved on the mind and proceeded to develop.

While education and upbringing could counteract bad impressions, it was clear that if a child read about a sexual murder between the ages of ten and twelve it could leave a very deep impression. That did not mean the child was predestined to become a sexual murderer, but it did mean that a certain educational influence was needed to modify the impression and turn it into something repellent.

It was important that this should be the period when the child became fully conscious of being part of the community because this afforded the best protection against criminality.

Another important age was between 17 and 18 years, because by then the young person had ceased to identify himself with his parents, whose place had been taken by teachers and other mentors. By then the young person was identifying himself with other people outside his own personality—with football and film stars, for example—because, while he wanted to be free, his mental legs were still shaky and he needed to lean on someone. But his choice was indiscriminate because he was not capable of distinguishing properly between right and wrong. It was dangerous, for instance, for a newspaper to suggest to him that a criminal was really a fine fellow who had committed robberies only to help other people.

Professor Hoff stressed that a single impression or event could never push a person over the edge. Analysis of the history of young delinquents showed a series of influences, beginning in early childhood and continuing to the time of the crime, which led to a trauma.

## Sadistic Comic Strips

While he did not underestimate the power of the press, it was complete nonsense to believe that a healthy well brought-up child could be changed into a criminal by reading a single newspaper article. Thousands of children were reading bad newspapers and magazines. Children reading comic strips, which were often full of sadism, did not necessarily become criminals, nor were children turned into sexual abnormals merely because they read the gutter press. But it might happen that a child read a news item

at a moment when he was particularly impressionable and looking around for a new subject to idealise. If there was nothing to counteract this impression, the news item might precipitate an offence but not cause it.

## Epidemic of Child Suicides

Professor Hoff gave two examples to illustrate his point. The first concerned an epidemic of suicides in Vienna among children between the ages of nine and fourteen. No child wanted to kill himself though he might toy with the idea of death because he believed that he could finally jump back to life out of the coffin and all would be well. There was proof, said Professor Hoff, that neither school nor newspaper had been a real cause of these child suicides. All the children had found themselves in a situation which they regarded as intolerable, either because of lack of parental love or because of too much of it. When they read a newspaper report which had glorified a suicide and described him as a victim of cruelty at school, the children saw at that moment a way out, because the newspaper had given them a tip. It had also been found that children attempted suicide as a form of blackmail against the parents and teachers. This led to the danger that a newspaper, by glorifying suicide, appealed to the child's sense of honour and made him feel that he must carry out his threat.

His second example concerned the mysterious poison E 605 which, after being used for a long time for agricultural purposes, had recently figured frequently in suicide and murder cases. The trouble had begun when an Austrian boy had had the idea of making his father ill with the poison so that he could visit his girl friend. The father had died and the newspapers had pointed out justifiably how dangerous the poison was. Once again, some people acted on the tip and Professor Hoff knew of 16 people who had committed suicide by this method. That was to say, the newspapers had failed in their intended purpose of acting as a deterrent against the use of the poison. The facts they gave would deter a healthy person but not a man obsessed with self-destruction.

There was another way in which press reports could be dangerous. Often the committal of an unusual crime was followed by others of the same type. Psychological examination of the criminals involved showed that the inherent roots of crime in their person-



alities often differed, but the actual deed was the outcome of what the criminal had read in the newspaper or seen in the cinema.

He warned his audience against the danger of describing murder or sexual offences in detail, quoting the case of a young murderer who had told him that the determining factor for him had been the description of a woman's foot in a newspaper account of a murder.

Professor Hoff cited as a final example the case of a handsome, intelligent young man who had had to give up studying for financial reasons and become a labourer. For reasons which had to be sought in his development he had become subject to a peculiar sexual tension, which could be satisfied by none of the normal outlets. One day he had read about a case of rape and at that moment he had felt : This is what I must do, this is the right thing. Thereupon he went out and committed a sexual attack in a extremely busy street—it was practically a case of self-destruction.

To what extent had the newspaper report been responsible ? The answer was that it was not responsible, but it had acted as a trigger.

Finally, he emphasized that psychiatrists did not object to free reporting. It was wrong of people to believe that a newspaper report, poster or film could really turn a young person suddenly into a criminal. If editors decided not to report sex crimes and crimes of violence at all, the number of offenders would not drop because the roots of crime lay much deeper. But the press must remember that it could be the trigger which released a crime. It could never affect young people as a whole but it could touch the individual who was in danger.

M. LOUWAGE pointed out that he would discuss the problem of crime reporting and the police at the international level but from his personal point of view. The extent of press coverage was, of course, determined by the laws and traditions of each country. In very few there was complete freedom to report crime fully, but in most countries such reporting was limited in varying degrees. He himself did not wish to criticise either system, but he was personally in favour of very great liberty. He believed that the only restrictions should be respect for the law of a country and certain ethical considerations.

As far as respect for a country's laws was concerned, his profession inclined him to the view that any infringement of the law should be condemned. Nowadays, however, the press was universally recognised as the guardian of liberty and some of its representatives sometimes disregarded certain laws on their own responsibility, often for a political reason and to safeguard liberty. It was not for him to question this behaviour.

## Impulse to Imitate

What were the moral effects of the full reporting of crime cases? He could say frankly that police authorities in all countries had often found that the sensational reporting of certain crimes, such as armed assaults, political murders, juvenile delinquency and certain types of fraud, would lead to similar crimes by way of suggestion and imitation. Some individuals, who were subject to criminal mental impulses, were influenced by the publication of these stories apparently extolling the audacity of the offenders. They decided to show the world that they could do the same thing.

This type of full reporting undoubtedly produced certain harmful effects, but was it possible to avoid them? It might be that these imitative criminals would have been driven to delinquency by some different circumstance. They were, so to speak, only awaiting a pretext to commit a crime and the pretext could be furnished, for example, by meeting other criminals. Further, in his experience, the detailed depiction of crime by the cinema also awakened criminal impulses and had an influence, particularly on young people who did not read newspapers.

Though many of his colleagues probably would not agree with him, M. Louwage believed that it would probably be sufficient to reduce suggestive effects in most cases, if the newspapers instead of extolling the audacity, cunning and recklessness of offenders, emphasised the repellent nature of their activities and pointed out that no criminal could escape justice.

Another argument frequently put forward by the police and court authorities against full reporting was that it made crime detection more difficult. During the past 25 years criminal techniques had developed considerably as the result of scientific progress, social upheaval and the collapse of frontiers. The police had countered this, but their counter-measures were sometimes

inferior to the means at the disposal of the criminal. If the press hampered the police, for example, by revealing that a certain person was suspect when the individual concerned should not know it, or by saying in which direction a fugitive was escaping, or by reporting that certain stolen objects had been found, or by making public evidence given by an accomplice, investigations might be unsuccessful.

The newspaper reporter's answer was that if the police made available more complete information and maintained closer contact with the press, journalists would be enabled to know what sort of information should be withheld.

## Press Cooperation with Police

Cooperation between the press and the police did present problems, and difficulties varied according to different legal procedures. In countries where investigations were secret until the opening of proceedings, the question of making available information to the press was delicate and complex. Strictly speaking, police officials who did give the press information which they had obtained in the course of their duties could be prosecuted and disciplined for violating professional secrecy. Nevertheless, there were cases in which a reporter himself found out certain things or in which it was in the interests of the investigation to reveal certain information to the press. It must also be borne in mind that in some countries it was not the police but the examining magistrate or state prosecutor who was in charge of criminal investigations. This meant that it did not always depend on the police what information was made public. Consequently, though some police officials were reluctant to talk to the press, their attitude should not be interpreted as lack of confidence.

Often information was given to journalists in order to enlist the help of the public. This happened when it was necessary to warn the public against a special type of criminal or when the police wanted the public's help to re-arrest an escaped criminal or when it was believed that stolen goods were being sold to unsuspecting buyers. Wherever normal relations existed between reporters and police, pressmen had never hesitated to help and their help had often led to successful results.

On the other hand, there were cases when newspapermen anticipated the course of the enquiries or when the police were afraid that this might happen. M. Louwage's own practice in such circumstances had been to take newspaper reporters into his confidence, tell them how dangerous it was to publish certain information and ask them to hold it until he released it. On no occasion when he had done this had any newspaperman broken the understanding.

What repercussions did the reporting of crimes of violence have? M. Louwage pointed out that he had already spoken about the suggestive effect of such reporting. He wished to stress, however, that there had been an increase in the number of both unpremeditated and carefully planned crimes, for which it seemed the press could be held in no way responsible. There was invariably an increase in certain crimes of violence after war upheavals, but this phenomenon was gradually disappearing and things were returning to normal.

### False Argument from Statistics

It had been said that in some countries where drastic measures had been taken to prevent the full reporting of crime, the number of offences had gone down. This might be true, but there was no evidence that it was only the limitations on the press which had caused the decline or that other measures taken by the authorities had not played an important part.

M. Louwage, however, had reservations about the full reporting of sexual crimes. Studies in criminal psychology had shown that sexual offenders, more than any other category of offenders, acted under an unconquerable impulse arising from perverse tendencies, either hereditary or acquired. In fact, they were sick people and he believed that in most cases the press should refrain from making public personal facts such as the name of the perpetrator. This reserve, however, depended on the circumstances and should not apply to cases in which it was necessary to warn the public—for example, if an offender operated in a certain region or was attracted by a certain category of people.

On the question of reporting court proceedings which took place *in camera*, M. Louwage felt that information about matters revealed in such circumstances should not be published.



Apart from restraint in covering sex crimes, newspaper reporters should be the sole judges of what should be reported from public hearings.

M. Louwage said that there was no time for him to deal in detail with his personal ideas on the respective rights and duties of journalists and the police, but he had come to the conclusion long before that these rights and duties were not so very conflicting. Far from causing mutual animosity, they should lead to real collaboration between the press and the police and he was glad to say that this was true of many countries.

How could a journalist best fulfil his duty of informing the public as fully as possible without impeding the course of justice? M. Louwage thought that the best results could be obtained if a fairly high official were appointed public relations officer to the press. This official should meet the press at fixed times and be equipped to answer questions as far as possible. If the press wanted information at night, the best way to meet the request and still make police information uniformly available to all was for the reporters to depute one of their number to receive and distribute the news or for the information to be given to a news agency. This method operated successfully in some countries and helped to avoid the problem of having minor police officials besieged by the press to speak on matters on which they had no authority, because on this system it was a high official in the police who took the responsibility and in most cases he was able to disclose a great deal more than a number of minor officials.

## Advice to Reporters

M. Louwage offered one or two pieces of advice to the press. The first was that the reporter should not present his article in the form of a police communiqué unless specially asked to do so by his police informant, because the authorities did not like to have the facts presented in this way. Again, members of the police force resented seeing the names of some of their colleagues repeatedly in print while they themselves were never given similar publicity because, though their work was of equal importance, they did not belong to a section which could furnish sensational information. This created jealousy and lack of discipline and was unfair.

To sum up, the best results were obtained by the right sort of cooperation between newspapermen and qualified police officials. Frequent meetings between them produced friendly understanding from which both justice and the rational informing of public opinion both benefited. Good relations did not oblige the press to refrain from criticism. As defenders of the freedom of information, journalists should point out the weaknesses in the organisation and tactics of the police force. Often such criticism had proved useful because it had aroused public opinion, which in turn had persuaded governments to adopt measures for improvement.

### *Discussion from the Floor*

CHARLES EADE (*Sunday Dispatch*, London) asked M. Louwage what he thought of the practice of newspapers of offering rewards for information on crimes. Mr. Eade thought that this did help the police. A good example had been the case of the murder of Sir John Drummond and his family in France, in which the local police had said that there were many people who probably could give information if they were given money to do so. He had personally offered a reward of half a million francs in the name of his newspaper and this offer had been doubled by a French newspaper. It was not known yet whether this had had any real effect. This act had naturally been criticised by many people as a newspaper stunt for obtaining extra news. Did M. Louwage think that this kind of practical enterprise helped the police in the solution of crime?

M. Louwage replied that in certain countries the police did dispose of certain funds for paying for information. He did not wish to go into the question further because it raised the whole problem of police informers and there were many for and many against such a practice. If rewards to informers were given by newspapers, it was essential that the money should be handed over directly from newspaper to informer and not through the police, because that led to criticisms that the police held on to half the reward. In general, M. Louwage thought it tactically a good idea for newspapers to offer rewards for information on crimes in countries where the police did not have funds of their own.

E. J. B. ROSE (Director) asked how far it was harmful to publish the names of juvenile delinquents. How far could that have an

effect either by way of deterrence or in its bad results on the child himself? What should be the policy of newspapers?

Professor Hoff replied that he had always thought that the practice of the Austrian press was right in never publishing the name of the young offender. It must be remembered that among such offenders there was always a large number of young people who were neither psychopathic cases nor born criminals; they were simply badly brought up and their misdemeanour was a single event in their lives. The publication of the names of such people in the newspapers meant that they would be damaged for their whole lives.

T. E. HENRY (*Manchester Evening News*) pointed out that Russia had just reintroduced capital punishment because of the terrific increase in crimes of violence. As there was no reporting whatever of crime in the Soviet Union, it seemed that there was no relation between reporting and crimes of violence.

CHR. S. OFTEDAL (*Stavanger Aftenblad*) asked Professor Hoff whether he was able to trace the effects of newspaper reporting of crime among the nervous and psychiatric cases with whom he had to deal.

Professor Hoff said that he did not think that anybody in good health became a nerve case through reading newspapers. Nor did he think that a single event could make an individual really ill. But it must be admitted that the anxiety state of people suffering from nervous illness could be very much increased by such newspaper reporting. There certainly existed a great many neurotics troubled by the fear that they might commit an act similar to what they had read in a newspaper. Thus, crime reporting could strengthen a symptom already existing but not create a neurosis.





*The  
Work of the  
Institute*



# THE WORK OF THE INSTITUTE

MORNING SESSION—TUESDAY, MAY 11

## *Business Meeting*

Chairman : LESTER MARKEL, Chairman of the Executive Board.

In his welcoming address, MR. MARKEL said that this was a critical meeting which was likely to determine the future existence of the Institute. He was convinced that the basic idea had taken root, but the Institute could not ultimately succeed unless three conditions were fulfilled : first, that the programme should be extended and dramatised ; second, that financial affairs should be set in order ; third, that the National Committees and the membership should play a larger part in the work.

He felt more than ever that the IPI concept was urgent. He could not repeat his credo too often—that the basic problem of the world was understanding ; that there could not be understanding without information that was accurate, complete and in perspective ; and that the newspaper was, or should be, the prime source of such information. No other medium could replace the newspaper for bringing the day by day flow of the news before the world's public.

The IPI survey of the flow of the news had shown that the picture one country was receiving of another was, on the whole, inaccurate, incomplete and sometimes incomprehensible. Recent events had indicated that public opinion generally was not as well informed as it needed to be to surmount the present world crisis. As the complexities of the continuing cold war increased, the editor's assignment grew in stature and urgency. Yet one could question seriously whether editors were growing with their assignment.

He would like to add two footnotes. It was said that this argument was fine theory and might provide an excellent formula for newspapers like *The Times* of London and *The New York Times*, but most newspapers needed circuses, crime and Kinsey for circulation. He was not asking that entertainment or decent sensationalism should be ruled out, but only that some of the significant news should be insinuated into the news columns in the hope that the

reader eventually would be educated to its importance. He was confident that the reader would not neglect such news if it was made understandable and if its urgency was indicated. The great and immediate task of journalism was to translate international news into the language of the main streets everywhere.

His second footnote concerned the statement that a newspaper's first job was to print the local news and there was not much space for "foreign news." But what news really was "foreign"? If war exploded again, local youth would fight and die on foreign soil. If local taxes were high, it was because the money was being spent to resist foreign aggression. If another local recession came, it might be because of barriers in foreign trade. Such news was not foreign, but near and immediate. That was why newspapers must do a better job in the field of foreign news.

In a recent speech President Eisenhower had indicated his concern with the flow of the news. Addressing the American Newspaper Publishers Association, he had talked about what Mr. Markel considered almost the number one problem of the world—the need of a well-informed American public opinion—and he had gone on to say that increased knowledge and understanding, which largely depended on the free full flow of information and its balanced presentation, were not only necessary to promote the unity of the American people but were equally necessary to the development of international cooperation.

## The Institute's Achievements

What had the Institute achieved in bringing about understanding among editors and on the flow of the news? In the first field of operation, the two general Assemblies in Paris and London had been very successful. The Institute had made a start with regional meetings of editors in the Franco-German conference and it was hoped to arrange a similar conference between British and American editors. It had also made a beginning on exchanges of journalists. Finally, there was IPI REPORT, which served as a link among members. All these efforts had shown the value of personal contact among editors to discuss their problems, but a much more extensive and intensive effort was still required.

As for the flow of the news, the survey had served an excellent purpose; if it had not come up with all the answers, he thought



it had at least asked the right questions. The survey had been criticised as theoretical and not practical, but Mr. Markel thought it was a chart for the most practical kind of exploration of newspaper work, because it had shed light on some of the primary issues in international journalism.

## Freedom of Information

Involved in the question of the free flow of news were the large issues of freedom of information, to which the Institute must pay urgent and constant attention. There were many signs that efforts to hamper press freedom were increasing. He had always felt that there were three views of press freedom. First, there was the view that the press should be completely free even if it abused its freedom. This was the only sound view because the only cure for bad papers was that the reader should stop reading them ; it would be disastrous if the government were permitted to step in. Second, there was the view that the newspaper should serve the purposes of the state and become in effect part of the government. Third, there was the view, standing between the other two, that in general the press should be free, but should be suppressed or distorted when the state required it. There was an alarming increase in this third view and too many editors seemed willing to accept it. The Institute must do its utmost to eradicate this attitude.

Apart from its two basic aims, the Institute was important because it had acted in areas in which Unesco or some other government organisation might move. He suspected that if IPI were not in existence, an attempt would be made to fill the vacuum through these other means and the result might well be calamitous.

Turning to criticisms of the Institute's work, Mr. Markel said that one charge was that it had been "too theoretical." Of those who said that there were not enough "tangible" results, he asked what more important or tangible result there could be than an improvement in the kind of news that newspapers published. An Institute of this type might be able to indicate in some way how circulations could be increased or newsprint conserved and so on, but basically the IPI could not and should not be a service organisation. It should be a kind of focus for the international spirit in journalism. It would continue to exist only if editors believed that theirs was a dedicated job. He thought that most editors had, even

if latently, this sense of dedication and that others wanted to help journalism everywhere for the good of man and that therefore IPI had a large meaning for them. This might be "impractical and intangible," but to him it was, in the long run, the most practical and the only moral position an editor could take.

With the second criticism—the charge of American domination of the Institute—he would deal as briefly as it deserved. Charges that IPI supporters in the United States had been trying to make customers for American news agencies, or attempting to impose the American system of newspaper work on the rest of the world, were without any basis in fact. Financial support from American Foundations and editors had been given with no motive other than idealism.

## Grave Problems Ahead

Grave problems confronted the Institute. Primarily there was the matter of finances. The Foundation grants, which had been given for a three-year trial period, had run out. He felt very strongly that the Institute could not exist indefinitely on outside subsidies, yet the hope that the newspaper industry would take over the financial burden had been only partially fulfilled.

The second cause for concern was inadequate participation by members. He felt that the Institute would never succeed unless its members, individually and collectively, played a larger part in the work, as was the case in other newspaper organisations.

He hoped that more proprietors and publishers could be interested in the Institute because they might then learn to appreciate some of the editorial problems. He suspected that there were a certain number of publishers who did not properly understand the truth that, while newsprint was important, what was printed on the newsprint was even more important.

As for the coming year's programme, Mr. Markel felt that it should follow primarily the two large objectives he had set out. First, links among members and communication among editors should be constantly nurtured through the annual Assemblies, seminars and the extension of IPI REPORT. Second, the Institute should pay full and increasing attention to questions arising out of the flow of the news. Third, much more should be done in the way of study and promotion of press freedom.

He believed that the concept of the Institute was a vital one and that its value had been demonstrated. Members must now take full and careful inventory and prepare a programme for the future in the light of the experience of the past.

E. J. B. ROSE, the Director, then reported on the record of the past year.

The flow of the news report, published in December 1953, had attracted a great deal of attention and requests for it had been received from all over the world. As a sequel to this report, the Institute had also published three booklets, relating to India, the United Kingdom and the United States, setting out in full the reports of foreign correspondents on the picture of their country in the press of the country where they were stationed. These also had attracted wide reporting and comment.

The Institute had also virtually completed a study of the flow of news from the Middle East to the world press and it was hoped to publish the report shortly after the Assembly. The study examined how far costs, communications and censorship were real obstacles to the flow of news from that area ; how far the area was covered by the agencies and newspapers, and how good this coverage was.

The main link between the Secretariat and the membership was the monthly magazine IPI REPORT. In the past year, two new language editions had appeared. The Secretariat had added a German edition, IPI RUNDSCHAU, which had been instrumental in gaining new members in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The Japanese National Committee had shown great initiative in producing a Japanese edition, which was distributed not only to the large IPI membership in Japan, but also to all members of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association. The Japanese Committee had borne the whole cost of this venture. In Italy, IPI members in the Institute of Journalism in Palermo had undertaken to produce a version in Italian, again entirely at their own expense.

During the year the Institute had held a meeting of French and German editors and foreign correspondents—the first of its kind—in Strasbourg, to discuss the problem of how to bring to their reporting of each other's country the greatest possible objectivity and

fairness. The meeting had taken place in an atmosphere of great goodwill and had, he thought, made a real contribution to international understanding. The discussions had been confined as far as possible to technical editorial questions. The Secretariat had prepared papers, which showed that all was not well, and shortcomings on both sides had been admitted. The conference had drawn up a gentleman's agreement to take the heat out of their mutual reporting. They had also agreed in principle on exchanges of articles, and specific arrangements had been made between German and French papers to take articles from one another in moments of tension. The meeting had further agreed that it was desirable to set up two-men commissions in Paris and Bonn—each consisting of an editor and a foreign correspondent—to watch for tendentious or false reports and draw the attention of editors privately to the harm that might be done thereby. The participants had felt the conference to be so successful that they had asked IPI to organise another one in the coming autumn.

## Exchanges of Journalists

At the second General Assembly a scheme had been launched for the exchange of journalists between member newspapers. The experiment had operated under the handicap that the Institute could provide no financial assistance. During the year nine member newspapers in seven countries had offered to receive journalists, but only five in two countries had been willing to let staff members go. The trouble was the great expense involved. The one full exchange which had taken place—between a Berlin and a Swiss journalist—had been very successful.

Although these exchanges were one of the most fruitful ways of promoting international understanding, there was often a further difficulty besides that of finance. This was the problem of language, and it might be that a journalist would get more benefit from travelling through a foreign country than from working on a host newspaper. Nevertheless, in such cases, the Institute could help by asking member newspapers in the principal towns visited by the travelling journalist to look after him. In this way an American member paper had recently given hospitality to a journalist from a Swiss member newspaper.



The basic question on exchanges, however, was one of finance and if the Institute obtained a grant towards this exchange scheme it would pursue it vigorously.

The Secretariat had been instructed at the last Assembly to study all reports and activities of the United Nations and keep members informed of any proposals from this or any other source which seemed to concern the general interest of the press. Special correspondents had been appointed in New York and Geneva, and the Institute had received extensive background reports on the recent meeting of the Economic and Social Council.

As for threats to freedom of the press, the Institute relied for information, in the case of an editor or other journalist being threatened in a member country, on the National Committee and reported such threats currently in IPI REPORT. It was for the National Committees to protest where such violations occurred, and the Institute would give publicity to such protests. There had been a recent case in which an IPI Committee had operated in the best interests of the profession. After the expulsion from Indonesia of a Dutch journalist, who was correspondent for a member newspaper in the Netherlands, the Dutch journalists in Indonesia had appealed to the Institute, which called for a report from the Indonesian Committee and from the Dutch newspaper. With great courage the IPI Committee in Indonesia had condemned the action of its government, although many Indonesian newspapers had applauded it.

## Work of Press Centre

A central activity of the Secretariat was the Press Centre, where 30 newspapers from 17 countries were read and cut daily and cuttings supplied by six press services were also filed. In addition to this "morgue," a useful library of works on the press had been built up. The Institute wished that members would make more use of the services of the Centre. In the past year enquiries that had been answered concerned the law in different countries relating to professional secrecy ; agreements in force in different countries to give reduced rates for press cables ; various codes of ethics ; and the differing practices relating to official secrecy and the availability of official documents. From information in the Press Centre the Institute had compiled for Mr. Lopez, the UN Rapporteur on Freedom of Information, a report on censorship and restrictive

practices in different countries. This report had been singled out for reproduction as an annex to Mr. Lopez' report to the Economic and Social Council.

The membership position had been revised during the year. At its meeting in December the Executive Board had decided that members who had not paid their subscriptions should not continue to be carried on the books. The result of weeding out non-paying members had been that, out of a total membership of over 650, 40 had been "lost." Since then, membership had increased to a total of 670, so that the position was really much healthier. One hundred new members had joined during the past year and 45 had resigned or died—a net increase of 55. There were members in 30 countries and National Committees in 28.

## Appeal to Publishers

The financial position was that, by the close of the Assembly, the Institute would have a balance of some \$30,000, representing partly a surplus from general funds and partly a surplus from the flow of the news grant from the Ford Foundation. As the original grants from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations expired this year, it had been decided at the last Assembly to launch an appeal to publishers to help support the basic overheads of the Institute. The results in some countries had been encouraging, but not so good in others. Members' subscriptions, which were paid by the publishers, brought the Institute an annual revenue of some \$15,000 and the special appeal, which was not yet completed, had produced a further \$17,500. Mr. Rose hoped that, as a result of decisions taken at this Assembly, the Institute would be able to go back to some countries from which there had been no response, and that others would increase the contribution already promised.

It was possible that the appeal to the publishers had been launched too early in the Institute's existence, but action had been taken because it was vitally necessary to show the Foundations that the Institute meant to stand on its own feet as soon as possible. In the meantime, an application had been made to the Foundations to continue their support for the next eighteen months.

The Institute had told the Foundations that it wished to develop a programme during that period which would convince editors and, through them, newspaper owners that IPI deserved their support.

It was therefore for the membership to say what it wanted. The proposed programme was in outline as follows :

The Executive Board proposed to continue the regular activities of the Institute—the monthly bulletin, the Press Centre and the annual assemblies.

The work done on the flow of the news would be followed up in special studies.

An exchange scheme would be launched on the existing lines, but with transport costs underwritten by the Institute.

Further meetings of editors from pairs of countries would be held.

The Institute would hold two seminars, one for German-speaking journalists in Zurich, to study the relations of press and governments at all levels in a democracy ; the other for foreign editors or sub-editors at the United Nations, to study its workings and the way its work was reported.

The Institute would produce a study of censorship of outgoing news.

It would also produce a series of monographs on the press in various countries, such as France, Japan, the Scandinavian countries and Germany.

Finally, the Institute had been studying how it could help the press in Indonesia and a further report on this would be made.

# THE FUTURE OF THE INSTITUTE

ALL DAY SESSION—THURSDAY, MAY 13

## *Business Meeting*

Chairman : LESTER MARKEL, Chairman of the Executive Board.

Discussion of the future programme of the Institute by members began with the financial position. MR. MARKEL said that the scale of future activities would depend to some extent on the amount of help given by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations but that, even without that support, the Institute must be carried on, if necessary on a reduced scale.

T. E. HENRY (*Manchester Evening News*) asked what the total budget was and what contributions were expected from the newspaper industry and from the membership.

E. J. B. ROSE, the Director, said that a distinction must be drawn between the running costs required to keep the Institute in being and the special projects it undertook. Overheads in Zurich were calculated at \$ 60,000 a year, which covered, in addition to general running costs, all administrative and some research and bulletin salaries. Costs of producing surveys and holding annual assemblies and other meetings were extra to this figure. The Institute had hoped to cover the overhead budget by its appeal to the industry and then go to the Foundations for financing such projects as exchanges of journalists, regional meetings, particular pieces of research and so on.

The appeal to the industry had been launched in October 1953 through National Committee chairmen. It was not yet completed, but so far it had brought in \$ 17,500. Revenue from membership fees amounted to some \$ 15,000 a year, but a little more than half of this remained in the countries where the fees were paid to cover such committee expenses as secretarial help for the chairman and payment of bulletin correspondents. Only some \$ 6,000 to \$ 7,000 was actually received in Zurich.

MAARTEN ROOY (*Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*) said that he was amazed that National Committee expenses took over half the



membership fees. He thought this figure too high and worth investigating.

Mr. Markel said that the Executive Board had taken the same view and had decided to examine the question closely.

Mr. Rose explained that one of the basic weaknesses of the Institute was the difficulty of getting the National Committees to work for it at all. National Committee chairmen were usually leading and busy editors, and special help had to be given them in the way of secretarial assistance. The amount of work to be done by the National Committees varied considerably from country to country and so did the payments which had to be made to get the work done. Some Committees asked virtually nothing, but the Institute could not demand this as of right. If the Institute was to prosper and obtain real participation from the membership, committee work had to be done and he did not see much prospect of a material change in the amount of money retained in countries for this purpose.

ERIK BENGTTSSON (*Karlshamn Allehanda*) suggested that the Institute could obtain more money by widening its membership to include more journalists who were not editors. This idea had the further advantage that admittance might be regarded as a certificate of the international standing of the journalists admitted. The establishment of the Institute as a kind of recognition board of journalists would be a great help to the press of the world.

Mr. Markel saw great merit in the suggestion. One of the things the Institute needed was more work from its membership, and he thought that some of the jobs now being done for payment could be done by journalists who would make their contribution in work rather than in money.

### Basic Question of Costs

DONALD TYERMAN (*The Times*, London) said the fact must be faced that the Institute was a long way from realising its hope that the running costs would be financed by the membership and special projects by the Foundations. Added together, the proportion of members' fees reaching Zurich and the money obtained from the appeal to publishers covered only about one-third of the overhead costs of \$ 60,000. Even if all the membership fees were transferred to headquarters, only half the total figure would be covered.

This was, in practical terms, the whole problem facing the Institute. The problem could be solved only in two ways. (A third choice, that of winding up, had rightly been ruled out.) Either membership must be increased or the scale of activities must be reduced.

The answer, as he saw it, lay in increasing the financial return from membership, but not by raising fees. More members must be obtained and that could only be done by producing a programme which caused more editors to want to join. In one respect, the Institute had suffered from making too good a start and this had been due to Foundation grants which had enabled it to begin fully armed with a programme and funds. The normal procedure for such a body would have been to start work on a modest scale and then attract Foundation support for established activities. The fact that it had started the other way round had complicated the problem, because not all the members would have chosen the activities which had attracted the original Foundation grants. That did not mean that these activities were necessarily wrong, but the problem now was to keep the Institute alive by devising a programme which the members wanted. Some firm decisions must be taken on this circle of ideas, because the existing financial situation could not be allowed to continue and the Institute should not meet the following year to face the same problem.

Mr. Markel thanked Mr. Tyerman for his clear exposition of the problem, but said that he ought to stress one point. The grant received from the Ford Foundation for the flow of the news survey had been quite separate from the grants from Ford and Rockefeller for the general work of the Institute.

## Extra Contribution Essential

Mr. Rose agreed with Mr. Tyerman's analysis but said that he did not think that the gap between operating costs and subscription revenue could be covered completely by increasing membership ; the Institute would still have to look to the publishers for extra contributions. It might, for instance, be possible to increase each category of membership by 400. This would produce another \$ 15,000, but that would not fill the gap. While a considerable increase in membership would strengthen the Institute's case with the publishers, the Institute must still look for a parallel and

separate contribution from them. The result of the appeal already made had been disappointing, but he did not think it had had the full backing of editor members, and the reason, he believed, was that members were not enthusiastically in favour of the programme.

Mr. Markel intervened to say that the situation in the United States had been difficult in one respect. When publishers were approached for an extra contribution, some of them pointed out that they were already contributing \$ 150 a year by paying the subscriptions for six members.

## Suggestions for Economy

CHARLES EADE (*Sunday Dispatch*, London) asked if costs could not be cut, because the figure of \$ 60,000 seemed high to him. He thought that many members agreed that the most valuable and interesting part of the Institute's work was the annual Assembly, at which editors could meet and discuss common problems. But they were not so wholeheartedly in favour of other projects such as the surveys and IPI REPORT. Could not expenditure on these extra activities be cut? How did the \$ 60,000 budget break down?

Mr. Rose explained that the salaries of the Secretariat personnel accounted for some 70 per cent—that was \$ 42,000. Of the salaries, some 40 per cent went for administration and 25 per cent for the monthly bulletin which, because of its publication in three languages, was an expensive production. The remaining 35 per cent was for the research staff. Therefore, it seemed logical that members should say whether they wanted the bulletin and what kind of research activities they desired.

Mr. Markel, who expressed his personal disquiet at the financial situation, said that he agreed with Mr. Eade that the Institute's most important function was the annual Assembly. At the same time, he thought that the Institute should devote itself to improving world understanding through improving the flow of news, and this could be achieved largely by cooperation of the membership and the National Committees. The Executive Board would re-examine the programme to see what could be done to realise the two main objectives while bringing the budget within a figure that could eventually be met by the newspaper industry. If the Institute then wished to proceed with projects such as its survey

of the flow of the news, these would possibly be financed by the Foundations.

## Working for Entire Press

REINHOLD HEINEN (*Kölnische Rundschau*) pointed out that, though the IPI was a body of editors, the work it was doing was for the entire press and was in the interests of both editors and publishers. Therefore editors, without prejudicing their independence, should give their full support to the idea that publishers should provide money for the Institute. He reminded his hearers that he was speaking as a publisher as well as an editor. In many countries, publishers' associations were already giving financial support to journalism faculties and university departments specialising in newspaper research.

As chairman of the German National Committee, he had been approached by Mr. Rose to raise a certain sum in Germany in connection with the appeal to publishers. Though there were far fewer newspaper readers per head of population in the German Federal Republic than there were, for example, in Britain, France or Switzerland, he had calculated that if German publishers gave one-eighth of a pfennig for each newspaper sold on a subscription basis, they could easily meet the IPI contribution asked of Germany. He was convinced that after German publishers had overcome their organisational difficulties—at present the two publishers' associations were negotiating a merger—the money needed for IPI could be raised without difficulty. He also believed that in other countries the task should be much easier. He was convinced that a way of raising the money could and must be found if the world press was not to disgrace itself before the public by failing to keep alive an international Institute whose purpose was to serve the entire free press of the world.

Mr. Markel said that sight must not be lost of the fact that the publishers were in reality already supporting the Institute by paying their editors' membership dues. He was in favour of admitting publishers as members, provided the Institute's programme remained essentially editorial.

SVEN AAGE LUND (*Berlingske Tidende*, Copenhagen) thought that publishers should do more. He proposed that member editors should suggest to their publishers that each pay a basic fee to the



Institute in addition to membership subscriptions. This basic contribution should be on a sliding scale according to circulation. The amount would not be large for any newspaper because of the great number represented in the Institute.

VINCENT NAESER (co-owner of *Berlingske Tidende*, Copenhagen, attending as an observer) asked permission to speak as a publisher. Editors must put the question clearly to their publishers—Do you want to survive and go on having your income in the next decades? If so, be a member of the Institute and pay up.

TOROLV KANDAHN (*Drammens Tidende*) said that the only proper solution was for publishers' organisations to contribute to the support of the Institute because its work was for the press and not for editors only. When the Norwegian National Committee, of which he was chairman, had received the appeal to publishers, it had approached the publishers' organisation for help. The publishers had agreed immediately that the matter should be settled by cooperation between themselves and the editors because they were extremely interested in the Institute's work. He was glad to be able to report to the meeting that the amount of the appeal for the first year had been raised in Norway and he was confident that within a few months the publishers' contribution could be settled on a permanent basis.

## Importance of IPI REPORT

Turning to the work of the Institute, he agreed that even if it did nothing else than organise meetings like the annual Assembly, it would be more than worth while. At the same time, he thought that the monthly bulletin IPI REPORT was the most important thing done by the Institute. It was a link between members which was an inspiration to them, as they learned from its pages the extent to which small and large newspapers all over the world faced the same problems. The magazine should go not only to members, but to every editor and publisher in every country. He thought that in the Scandinavian countries the translation of the bulletin into the appropriate language should be carried out on an annual rotation basis by Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

He did not agree that the Institute had reached a critical stage in its life. He thought it was on too solid a foundation for that.

Mr. Markel raised the question whether publishers might not

feel that there was a certain amount of duplication if their organisations were asked to contribute to IPI as well as to the *Fédération internationale des Editeurs de Journaux*.

MASAO TSUDA (Secretary-General of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association), said that he saw no reason why publishers' associations in other countries should not support the Institute. Publishers and editors in Japan had willingly accepted the task of raising the donation asked for in the Institute's appeal to publishers. Further, his Association was spending a great deal of money in translating IPI REPORT into Japanese to distribute to its members. The Institute should appeal to publishers more and more for support and it was the responsibility of each member to back that appeal. His association paid a subscription both to the Institute and to the FIEJ.

### Flexible Approach Urged

AHMED EMIN YALMAN (*Vatan*, Istanbul) urged that National Committees should show a more flexible approach to the finance problem. As National Committee chairman in Turkey he had sought help from other sources than publishers in order to exceed the figure asked for in the appeal. He had approached, for example, the Turkish journalists' association and it had immediately contributed the amount he asked for.

Mr. Markel said that it seemed to be the sense of the meeting that there was no objection to receiving contributions from anybody who believed in the objectives of the Institute.

DAN PINES (*Davar*, Tel Aviv) offered several suggestions for extending the Institute's work and making it a self-supporting organisation as far as possible. First, the number of associate members should be greatly increased by opening the category to all full-time professional journalists who had worked for a minimum period as political, diplomatic or foreign correspondents for a newspaper represented in the Institute. Second, the Institute should establish international relations among working journalists. Third, the Institute must find a proper way of attracting publishers into participation in its activities. Fourth, any research work done in a certain area should have the participation, advice or supervision of the National Committees concerned. Fifth, the National Committees should enlarge their memberships and work out a

scheme to popularise the IPI in their particular country by lectures and pamphlets and so on. Sixth, special attention must be paid to interchange among editors, news editors and sub-editors.

He pointed out that a considerable part of the published work of the Institute had been translated into Hebrew and incorporated in the year book of the Israeli journalists association.

### Three Fields of Activity

CHR. S. OFTEDAL (*Stavanger Aftenblad*) said that a clear distinction must be drawn financially among the three different fields in which the Institute was active. There was, first, the purely administrative field. The cost here, if Mr. Rose's calculations were correct, could just be covered by increasing membership to 1,000. Then came the monthly magazine and finally the research programme.

He thought that the magazine was of great value as a means of contact between members. It must therefore be continued at all cost and he suggested that one way to finance it would be to introduce advertisements. As a specialist magazine for editors it should appeal to advertisers.

As for research, it was good to do this work if grants were forthcoming from the Foundations and other such sources. But all over the world universities were doing this type of research. Would it not be better for the Institute to coordinate the research work done by universities rather than initiate research itself? The monthly magazine was a good medium for recording the results of university research.

Mr. Markel said that he did not know of any university which was doing the kind of research undertaken by the Institute. For example, the flow of the news survey had broken entirely new ground. He reminded the meeting again that this piece of research had not been included in the Institute budget proper but had been a separate project with a separate grant. He also thought that the Institute must pay a great deal of attention to the question of the freedom of the press and this involved considerable work of a research type for the Secretariat.

Mr. Rose said that the question of placing advertising in the monthly bulletin had been given a great deal of thought in the Secretariat. If the Institute were not to be supported by Foundation grants, he thought that IPI REPORT would have to take advertise-

ments. It was probable that advertising could be obtained, but he was against introducing it unless it was necessary, because it might lessen the bulletin's authority.

On the question of acting as a clearing house for university studies, he valued the research done in faculties of journalism, but much of it was academic and the Institute did not want to be academic. For the Institute to act as a clearing house would mean producing some sort of publication to review research and that would mean either enlarging IPI REPORT considerably or producing a separate quarterly.

A more relevant question was what kind of research the Institute should do itself. If it was to be any kind of a research organisation, a nucleus of research staff must be maintained in Zurich for planning projects such as the Middle East survey, which had just been completed, and the survey of news from Russia, which had been published in 1952.

## Question for National Committees

FRITZ HARZENDORF (*Neue Württembergische Zeitung*, Göppingen) said that in 45 years in journalism he had belonged to a great number of organisations. His experience was that the only guarantee of an organisation's success was that it should have a completely reliable financial basis and not depend on chance and occasional contributions.

He was fully convinced of the value of the Institute and a solid financial basis for it must be found. He thought that the key to the question lay in the National Committees. The Secretariat should calculate a target figure for each country and make the National Committee responsible for raising that amount.

Mr. Rose said that this was what in effect had been done by launching the appeal to publishers last October, but the response had not been great enough. This, he was sure, had been because members were not all sufficiently convinced of the absolute necessity for fulfilling the target figure calculated. The problem was to find a way of convincing these members.

The discussion of finances was then closed.

Mr. Markel, opening the discussion of the future programme, started with the annual Assembly. Had members any suggestions to make?



URS SCHWARZ (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*) said that the discussion this year of relations between press and government had been so interesting that the subject should be regularly discussed at all Assemblies. The proposal was carried by acclamation.

Mr. Oftedal said that a subject discussed recently in IPI REPORT, "New Life for the Editorial Page," should be discussed at a future Assembly.

Mr. Bengtsson suggested that at the next Assembly editors should hear prominent persons criticising the press because it gave them a new angle on editorial problems.

Mr. Markel pointed out that such a panel had been part of the first Assembly in Paris as well as of the second Assembly in London. That was why it had not been repeated this year.

He asked whether the meeting agreed that the practice should be continued of having people prominent in international politics as guest speakers at lunches, or whether leading newspaper people should be invited. The feeling of the meeting was for a continuance of the present practice.

Mr. Henry suggested that the next Assembly should discuss public relations officers, the growth of the handout and the consequent atrophy of real reporting.

Mr. Rose said that this subject had already been considered and might well be included in the next Assembly programme.

Mr. Markel said that the Director wished to know whether members agreed that the majority of panel speakers should be editor members rather than outsiders.

Mr. Tyerman said that he wished to record his view that the programme this year had been the right kind of programme because it had brought editors to the platform to discuss editors' problems.

Mr. Markel then raised the general problem of research.

## South East Asian Problems

MOCHTAR LUBIS (*Indonesia Raya*, Djakarta) proposed a research study of the flow of news from South East Asian countries. There was a feeling in South East Asia that reports on the area concentrated too much on sensational events, such as fighting and murder. Neglect of the constructive work being done was creating a real misunderstanding of what was happening in South East Asia.

Mr. Rose said that the proposal would be considered. The research on the Middle East which the Institute had just completed had been concerned to a large extent with the same kind of problem. Mr. Lubis's remarks confirmed the belief that in this kind of study of the flow of the news there were many areas to which the Institute should extend its activities.

## Resolution on Press Freedom

Mr. Markel next raised the question of what the Institute could do about safeguarding the freedom of the press. He read out a resolution on the subject put forward by Dr. Schwarz and it was carried unanimously. The resolution stated :

"The General Assembly of the International Press Institute meeting in Vienna has been informed of the relations between press and government existing in different lands of the free world and has discussed present facts and tendencies. It has noted with great concern that even in countries which uphold democracy and whose governments would reject the thought of applying dictatorial powers, there exist trends which limit the freedom of the press through new laws or the application of existing laws.

"The leading editors of the free press, united in the International Press Institute, *declare* that the limitation of the freedom of the press at any time and anywhere paves the way to the establishment of the rule of despotism and injustice even where restrictions were imposed for worthy reasons. The Assembly *warns* the authorities in all free countries against any attempts to undermine the freedom of the press since they would destroy the basis of their own existence, freedom and justice. It calls on the press to defend its freedom with the greatest vigilance. It *demand*s that its Secretariat should report regularly any attempt, direct or indirect, to influence the freedom of the press."

HERBERT TINGSTEN (*Dagens Nyheter*, Stockholm) proposed that some research should be done on the subject of press freedom. He did not mean a listing of the press laws that existed in various countries but a summary of the methods used by different govern-

ments to restrict the freedom of the press. Several of these methods had been described during the panel discussion "The Press and Governments," and it was clear that some of them were extremely complicated. One method which had not been mentioned was the use of newsprint rationing. It would be useful for the Institute to compile a summary of these restrictive measures, so that it would be seen that editors regarded this and that practice as limitations of press freedom.

There were other problems about press freedom apart from relations between newspapers and their governments. For example, relations between publishers and editors varied considerably and he thought it would be useful if the Institute also summarised these differing relations. There was no doubt that some editors knew that their independence depended on their publisher's policy. This was a more complicated and difficult problem than that of the relations between newspapers and governments and was one which the Institute should not avoid. It was wrong to stop short at general resolutions about press freedom on points about which everybody was agreed and not to study also the connection between editor and publisher.

Mr. Rose pointed out that a study of censorship of outgoing news was already on the Institute's programme. The problem of pressure on newspapers within countries was harder to tackle because of the difficulty of obtaining information. Nevertheless he thought that an illustrative, as contrasted with an exhaustive, study of governmental pressure on newspapers, as Professor Tingsten had suggested, could be done.

## When Freedom is Threatened

On the general question of press freedom in different countries, the Institute's problem was that it had no National Committee in those countries where freedom was gravely threatened. But evidence had come before the present Assembly of dangers to press freedom also in countries where there were National Committees, and he hoped that the Committees would provide the necessary information to the Institute. He also expressed the hope that the National Committees would protest in the name of the Institute when threats occurred. If IPI was to mean something, National Committees must be active against any threat on behalf of their

national press, whether the individual editor threatened was a member of the Institute or not.

As for Professor Tingsten's second point about the relations between editors and owners, the Secretariat had been studying two aspects of the problem. One was the question of editors' contracts and the other was a study of newspaper trusts. The result of the work done would be published in IPI REPORT.

CARL LINDSTROM (*The Hartford Times*, Connecticut) said that one constant problem of press freedom concerned access to information. Every meeting of editors he had attended in recent years had had this subject before them and in the United States important victories had been won. But one discouraging feature of the situation seemed to be that the people had, at least in some measure, lost their wish to know what was going on in matters that really concerned them deeply. This challenge to the newspaper was greater even than the threat from officialdom. If people were to revive their wish to know, newspapers must do something to light again the fires of curiosity. Growing indifference on the part of the public was paralleled everywhere by the tendency of governments to work out of sight of the people, as a result of a feeling among officials that they were experts who should not take account of public opinion. It was for the newspaper to rekindle the public desire to know.

## Need for Publicity

E. CARLEBACH (*Maariv*, Tel Aviv) said that studies of the way in which governments interfered with press freedom were a valuable part of the battle against encroachment, but they were not enough. The easiest, cheapest and most effective way in which the Institute could fight for press freedom was very simple. If newspapers gave to attacks on press freedom the prominence they deserved, the effect would be immediate. Most countries were extremely sensitive, and if the ambassador of a certain country, in which press freedom had been threatened by the government, read in the newspapers of the country to which he was accredited reports about the incident, he would report to his minister and that would have repercussions. The press in general did not give sufficient prominence to news of interference with press freedom, especially in small countries and in countries where the government had inter-



ferred successfully. Whenever an IPI National Committee reported an encroachment on press freedom, the Institute should appeal to all its members in other countries to play up the story.

Mr. Oftedal said that, with reference to Professor Tingsten's comments about relations between newspaper editors and owners, an agreement existed in Norway between the publishers' association and the editors' association regarding the freedom of the editor to work as he wished. This Magna Carta of the Norwegian editor was the result of four years of work in which the chairman of the IPI National Committee, Mr. Kandahl, had played the leading part. He thought that this charter would be of interest and use to editors in other countries as a basis for similar agreements. The last paragraph of the agreement stated : " The editor is personally and entirely responsible for the editorial content of the paper and he must not allow himself to be influenced to uphold opinions contrary to his conscience and convictions. He directs and accepts the responsibility for the activities of his editorial staff." He was glad that a full account was to appear in an early issue of IPI REPORT.

Mr. Markel then raised the question of meetings between editors from pairs of countries. The Franco-German conference had been a great success and he thought that a similar meeting between British and American editors would be useful in removing causes of friction. He thought that these meetings were the most useful way in which the flow of the news survey could be implemented, because editors from different countries were able to meet and discuss what kind of news passed between their countries. There was general agreement.

## Plan for Exchanges

Mr. Markel next raised the subject of exchanges of journalists. He pointed out that the Secretariat had worked out a plan for exchanges. What were members' views ?

MORRIS BROUGHTON (*The Cape Argus*, Cape Town) said that there were three schemes of exchange in existence which South African editors would not like to see interfered with. There was first the scholarship system by which the newspaper proprietors each year gave a journalist an award which took him for 12 to 18 months to Britain to gain wide experience on the papers there. There were

also the Commonwealth Press Union scheme and an exchange system under which the United States took men to work for six months on different newspapers there. If the Institute devised a scheme of its own, he thought it best that it should be linked with these existing schemes.

Mr. Rose said that the type of exchange envisaged by the Institute was different. It would enable a man to work for three months on a newspaper and one object was, as far as possible, to bring American sub-editors to Europe. There was considerable movement of journalists into the United States on finance provided under the State Department's scheme to which Mr. Broughton had referred. The Institute wished to arrange exchanges between countries of a common language for which no scheme existed as, for example, the exchange now operating between Germany and Switzerland.

## Foundation Support Urged

G. PRESCOTT LOW (*The Quincy Patriot Ledger*) said that he had been secretary of an American committee which three years before had studied exchange schemes. It was his personal feeling that a good exchange programme must have Foundation support for two reasons. First, if a journalist went to a country where there was a lower standard of living than there was in his own, Foundation money should provide him with extra funds to live there as he was accustomed to living at home. Secondly, he thought that a newspaperman should take his wife and family with him, because the wife could also play an important part in the community life of the town to which the journalist went.

E. PETÄJÄNIEMI (*Ilta-Sanomat*, Helsinki) said that he thought that exchanges should be worked out not only between countries of the same language but also between countries where the same language was not spoken. A scheme restricted to the former meant that some countries, such as the Scandinavian, could not take part. He agreed that, if this were done, the visiting journalist would be of less value to the newspaper he joined because of his ignorance of the language, but he could at least develop his knowledge of a foreign country and that was useful.

Mr. Lubis said that the IPI exchange programme had a special importance for the Indonesian press, which faced peculiar

problems. The press had the right to fight for its freedom only if it continuously printed the truth and nothing but the truth. This was not an easy task for many Asian papers with very limited circulations. Newspapers whose circulation figures ran between 3,000 and 25,000 copies a day tended to seek financial as well as political protection and to sell their souls to outside interests. To combat this tendency, the Institute's help was needed and because the exchange programme meant that Indonesian newspapers would participate in the benefits of the higher press traditions obtaining elsewhere in the world, his country needed special consideration. To send Indonesian journalists abroad to study editorial and management techniques required money and newspapers willing to accept them.

Mr. Markel said that he thought it was important for the exchange programme to consider the need to educate the telegraph editor or sub-editor. These men, who often had the primary job of handling international news in the United States, had frequently never been even outside their own state.

## Helping Visiting Journalists

OTTO SCHOENHERR (*Die Presse*, Vienna) said that he felt sceptical about exchange programmes between small newspapers in small countries. A guest from a foreign newspaper could not work very easily on such a newspaper without dislocating the staff arrangements. But he could make a suggestion about short visits abroad by newspapermen. If, for example, a journalist from another country wrote to Dr. Schönherr and said that he would be spending three days in Vienna, during which he wanted to interview certain people and obtain certain information, he was quite sure that he could make the arrangements. The experience of the local newspaperman used in this way would help the visiting journalist to get the maximum value from his trip. Such an informal scheme could be organised without much money or difficulty through the National Committees. Though it did not amount to an exchange programme in the proper sense, it might improve reporting and personal contacts between members.

E. M. LAW YONE (*The Nation*, Rangoon) said that Burmese editors were willing to make specific contributions to an exchange programme as far as they were able, because it was not right for

editors to depend entirely on the Institute. He was ready to pay the passage both ways of an intending exchange student and was prepared to send one of his assistant editors to, say, New York, if a newspaper there would look after her for a year, during which time she would earn her keep by working for the paper and also probably try to qualify at the Columbia School of Journalism ; in return, her specialised knowledge of South East Asia would be of value to a New York newspaper. This was the sort of concrete proposal which was required and he was sure that other countries, such as Indonesia, India and Pakistan, would come forward with similar practical schemes concerning specific journalists.

Mr. Markel then summarised the other proposals in the programme. It was agreed that a seminar for a group of editors or foreign affairs specialists to study the working and reporting of the United States, a seminar for German-speaking journalists in Zurich to discuss relations between press and government at all levels in a democracy, and possibly a similar all-European seminar, should be undertaken provided funds were available.

## Priorities Outlined

Mr. Tyerman said that, in his opinion, the Assembly's instructions to the Executive Board had emerged clearly from the discussion. There was general agreement that there should be an attempt to increase revenue and cut expenditure to narrow the gap between income and outlay. It seemed hardly possible in the near future to eliminate the gap altogether, but it was agreed that the Institute was well worth immense pains and even economies in order to keep it going.

But most important for the Executive Board was the meeting's guidance on priorities in the Institute's work. The first and most useful purpose served by the Institute lay in bringing together editors, not only in annual multilateral assemblies but also in periodical bilateral meetings.

The second priority was the importance of the monthly bulletin as part of the process of keeping editors in touch with one another.

The third priority was research which, he suggested, could be fitted into the programme only insofar as members regarded each piece of research as useful and the research could be afforded.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of officers. Mr.



Markel announced that he was not standing for re-election as chairman of the Executive Board and said that the Board recommended Eljas Erkko (*Helsingin Sanomat*, Helsinki) as the new chairman. Mr. Erkko was elected unanimously.

Mr. Rose announced that, of the five members of the Executive Board retiring by rotation, four — Mr. Erkko, Chikao Honda (Japan), Oscar Pollak (Austria) and Ahmed Emin Yalman (Turkey) — offered themselves for re-election. J. Murray Watson (Britain) did not seek re-election and A. P. Wadsworth (*Manchester Guardian*) had been nominated in his place. The four retiring members and Mr. Wadsworth were unanimously elected to the board. On the proposal of the German members present, Dr. Heinen was elected to replace the late Erik Reger on the Board.

The final item on the agenda was the place of meeting for the 1955 Assembly. There were two proposals — Copenhagen and Istanbul. Copenhagen was selected on a show of hands. During the discussion it was suggested that, for economy reasons, the Assembly might be held in Zurich and it was agreed that the Secretariat should have discretion, if necessary to replace Copenhagen with Zurich.

A vote of thanks to the Austrian National Committee was passed.



070.431	IPI Assembly
In8g	1954 Proceedings
1954	
4/6/62	
<b>UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY</b>	
Name	<i>W. M. [Signature]</i>
Identification Number	<i>40 [Signature]</i>
Address	<i>MAY 8 1962 +7</i>

JOURNALISM



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 100580874